REINING IN A JUDGE ❧ FREDERICK TURNER ON MARS ❧ WELFARE REFORM POLLS

THE AMERICAN ENTERPRISE

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A National Magazine of Politics, Business, and Culture

Marsalis & Crouch
on jazz

Michael Medved
on religion

James Webb
on the military

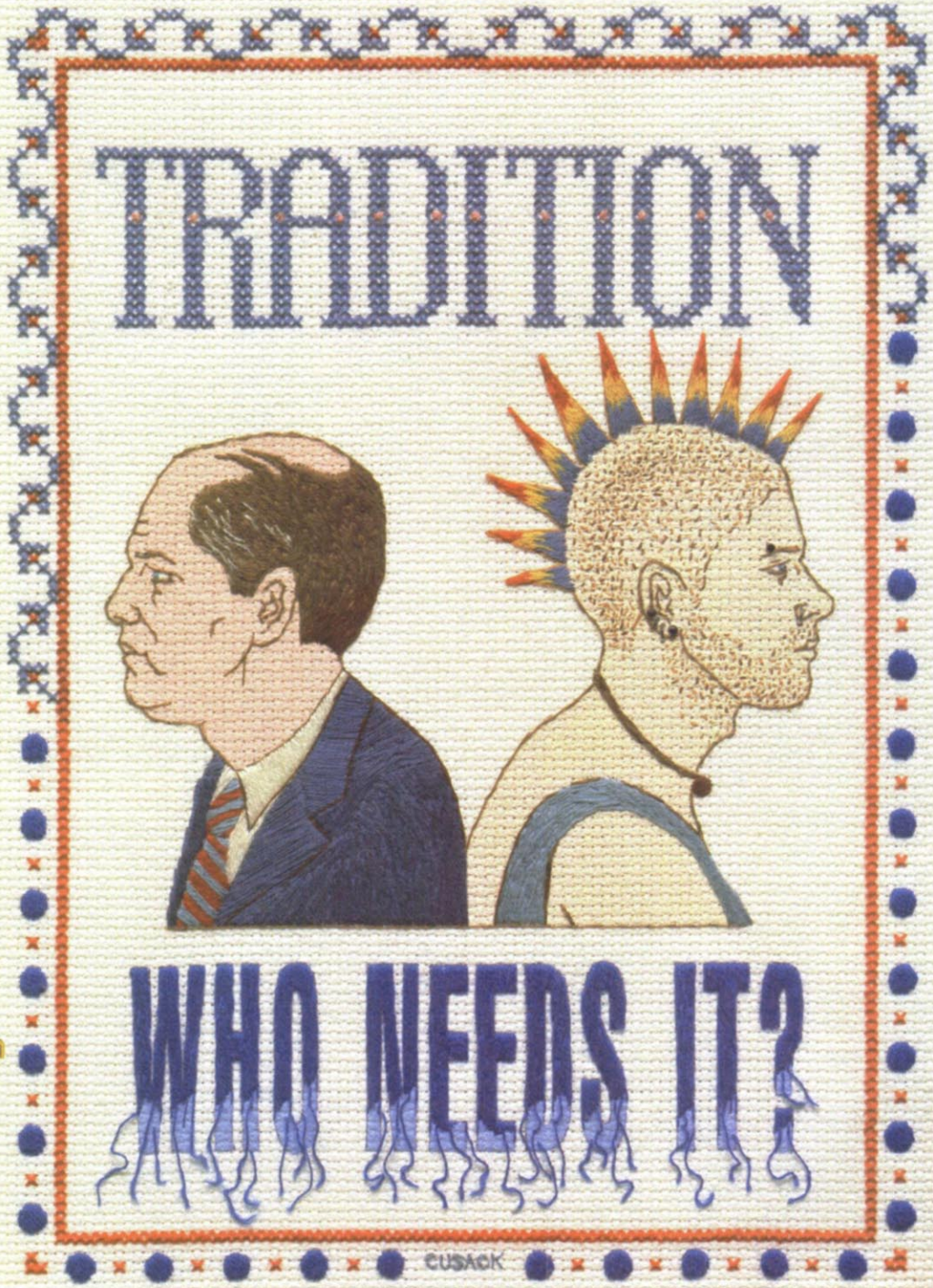
E.D. Hirsch
on schools

Miss Manners
Defends courtesy

Mark Steyn
Anti-traditional Europe

Old-style baseball parks
Tradition and the sexes
Classic arts return
Traditional families

Charles Murray, Virginia Postrel, James Glassman on The Future



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March/April 1997

Volume 8, Number 2

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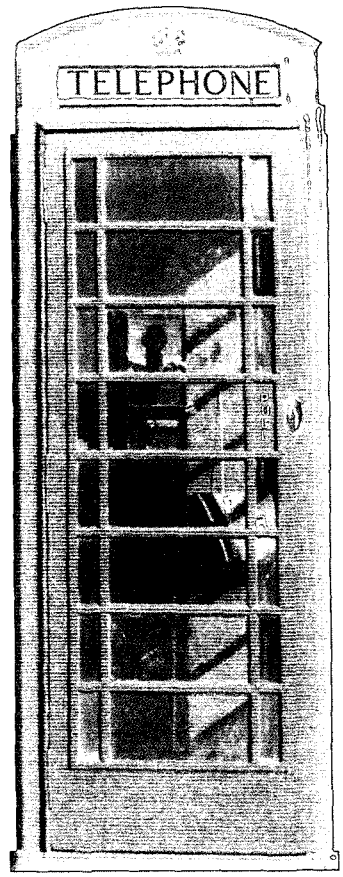

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Bird's Eye

Karl Zinsmeister

Tradition Works

A week ago I was in a cab in Washington, D.C., when my driver (a Nigerian immigrant, like many D.C. cabbies) began to do something interesting. He started talking on his two-way radio with at least two other drivers in a fast, repetitive, sing-song. All three of them started to guffaw and giggle through the static, and the pace became fast and furious. They seemed to be trying to "top" each other in some sort of orating contest.

Just before we reached the airport I smiled at the driver and told him I was dying to know what was going on. He said he and his friends were just having fun, discussing issues of the day, and wisecracking in their Yoruban language. "It sounded like you were doing a lot of rhyming, and kind of chanting in meter," I said.

"Yes, exactly," he answered. "That's something we learned from our parents as little children. It's a way of talking and joking by using rhymes and repeating words with a beat. Some lines we make up, some are memorized. We try to make sentences that will make each other laugh." What I was listening to, in other words, was oral folk poetry. Very *traditional* folk poetry.

This incident occurred just after I had finished editing Fred Turner's article (see page 58) on the inextinguishable power of the traditional poem. Today's poetry establishment mostly loathes the constraints of formal meter and rhyming. Given this disdain, there is only one reason traditional poems continue to be made: Because they "work."

Formal poetry moves people. It makes them laugh. It taps the primordial power of a thumping heartbeat, an echoing human voice, a repetitive strain of bird or insect music. Traditional poetry simply captures our imagination more easily than formless "free" verse. This power is recognized by everybody from rap musicians to greeting card makers. Everybody, that is, *except* modern intellectuals.

No question about it: Among educated elites, "traditional" practices now have a bad name. They're stodgy. Unimaginative. Boring. Intolerant. Dangerously right-wing. Unworkable. Out of date. With futurists claiming that "the total stock of human knowledge now doubles every 15 years," the question looms: What relevance do traditional ways of thinking, acting, and working still have, if any?

The cumulative evidence of the articles you are about to read—touching on everything from music to schooling methods—is that older wisdoms still have lots of relevance. Tradition, you see, isn't simply the sum of old prejudices. Rather, it is a series of highly evolved, deep understandings of human nature. That Corinthian column fronting a classic building near you isn't some arbitrary construct, architect Allan Greenberg notes on pages 54-57, but something based on innate human perceptions and mathematical proportions. It's never going to lose its visual power, its "right" look, due to changing fashions. Nor is the traditional family ever going to be overridden or become irrelevant—because it suits the unchanging basic needs of human beings (see pages 28-33). The traditional family is our "natural" dwelling unit; it is history's verdict on the family.

The media chatter on things like traditional families and traditional values is that they are just "wedges" used to divide Americans, mere cudgels for bashing cultural opponents. Actually, the truest reason for defending traditional institutions is that they are likeliest to make people happy and secure in the long run. A little story may illustrate this.

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It seems two individuals were driving down a highway in a large truck when they came to a bridge underpass with a big, stern sign in front of it reading "Absolutely no vehicles over 10'3" allowed." They pulled over to the shoulder, got out their measuring tape, and it turned out their truck was 11'4" tall.

At this point, the second guy looked to the driver and asked "What should we do?" The driver glanced both ways, then answered: "Not a cop in sight. Let's chance it."

There are some rules and conventions, obviously, that it is futile to flout. All we do in ignoring them is endanger ourselves and those traveling with us. This is especially true when *cultural*, rather than legal, rules are involved. Most often, those guidelines are there for our own good.

Tradition's big yellow "Not Allowed" signs are usually erected not to punish or harass, but to try to save people from finding out what can happen when you drive unprepared into the hard rocks or steel girders of reality. How many of the critics claiming that traditional ideas are needlessly restrictive or mean-spirited realize that children growing up in non-traditional families are three times likelier to end up with behavioral problems and six times likelier to be poor? The truth is, upholding time-tested traditional practices is *humane*.

Tradition isn't only humane. It is also *practical*. Opponents often charge that tradition is built on empty symbols and ineffectual nostalgia. Old ways, it's often said, offer no solution to *today's* problems. That's badly mistaken.

Consider the continuing power of traditional religion to change lives. Careful studies published a few years ago by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that church attendance is a more accurate predictor of whether someone will commit a crime, use drugs, or drop out of school than knowing whether the individual lived in public housing, or grew up in a single-parent household, or had parents who received welfare. Churchgoing, concluded researcher Richard Freeman, is the factor that most affects who escapes from inner-city poverty.

Tradition *works:* that's a refrain that appears over and over in this issue. Everyday courtesies and manners are not just decorative, warns Judith Martin—they are our only alternative to strict laws, more coercion, and rampant incivility. Traditional courtship rules lay the groundwork for successful marriages, notes Mary Elizabeth Podles. Military traditions are not just brass-plated balderdash, states James Webb; they are the glue that keeps men from falling apart in the face of war's viciousness. And traditional schools and teaching methods, E.D. Hirsch says, are unquestionably the best instruments for helping underprivileged children.

Hirsch is an avowed political liberal. But he recognizes that respecting and using tradition is not an ideological act or something that makes sense only if you are a conservative. It is simply *smart*, he believes—because traditional schools are more successful.

Hirsch is not alone in this. Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Crouch, whom we interview on pages 20 to 23, aren't really men of the right, or even particularly political. They admire and defend tradition in the jazz world, where they work, primarily because that's where the finest artistry lies. For a jazzman, respect for tradition means connecting yourself with the best that's already been discovered. It means measuring yourself against the very highest standards. He who apprentices himself to tradition gains humility and creative continuity and excellence.

UPHOLDING TIME-TESTED TRADITIONAL PRACTICES IS HUMANE—AND PRACTICAL.

When Raymond Kaskey, a traditional figural sculptor, had one of his works picked to adorn what may be the most famous building erected in the 1980s (Michael Graves' Portland, Oregon municipal center), he was attacked by modernists. One suggested that his proposal ought to be "thrown out" on the grounds that its style had "died of old age" more than a hundred years earlier. Kaskey responded that if modernism was "all about inventing yourself," then his interest was in "keeping everything everybody else does." The "great tradition of Western sculpture," he noted, "is thousands of years old, it is part of our minds, part of the baggage we carry around in our heads. Why not use it?"

Neither Kaskey nor anyone else edging us toward tradition today is doing anything nearly so simple as taking dictation from the past. These men and women are putting distinctive temporal stamps on their work. But they are doing so within a common inherited language.

Tradition is not something dusty and dead. It is a living, evolving, organic thing to which we can profitably connect ourselves as we seek grandness. It is something we can occasionally make even grander through our own subtle deflections and refinements. When we listen to Marsalis and Crouch talking about the importance of being loyal to previous generations, we could just as easily be hearing two guys talking about writing great novels, practicing an ancient religion, admiring great buildings, or respecting one's family elders.

As further evidence that one can appreciate tradition no matter what one's political perspective, TAE contributor and art aficionado Paul Cantor points to a Norwegian painter of rising greatness named Odd Nerdrum. Nerdrum has chosen to paint in the old master style of Rembrandt and Caravaggio—despite being a political radical whose paintings have celebrated subjects like Andreas Baader of the infamous Baader-Meinhof anarchist gang. While Nerdrum's personal sympathies are sharply left-wing, he harnesses the power of tradition to express them because he recognizes that there is no higher or more persuasive medium of artistic communication.

Interestingly, the modernist art establishment has rejected Nerdrum (just as the liberal establishment has scorned Hirsch, Kaskey, Crouch, and Marsalis). No matter what the rest of their program amounts to, people who defend traditional forms will forfeit all acceptance by liberal modernists. Yet all of the individuals I've mentioned above have found an audience anyway—by going around elites (often with the help of friendly conservatives) to reach the public directly.

And the intriguing thing is that everyday people have responded warmly to their traditionalist messages. Hirsch, for instance, has inspired his own grassroots movement. The little secret that anti-traditionalists would rather not have advertised is that tradition is *popular*.

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Contrary to claims, it isn't intensive nursing from a bunch of fuddy-duddy old graybeards that keeps tradition from dying. Rather, it is the spontaneous love and delight of the people. This is illustrated well by our article on the return of traditional baseball parks (page 52). Starting in the 1960s, planners tried to herd fans in many cities into new "rationalized" stadiums. But the previous generation of beautiful, human-scale parks like Wrigley and Fenway remained standing, and they ended up serving as everyday rebukes to the chilly, Brave New Rings of concrete. Then, after a generation of fumbling, someone was smart enough to recognize that there is a *market* for tradition, that regular people *like* to take their families to places that feel cozy, and old, and personal. Places that are made of brick and real grass, that are lumpy and quirky, like people, not machines. The boom in old-style baseball parks now sweeping the country isn't some fashion flash; it's a return to more permanent, highly evolved styles of building that respect and accurately reflect human nature.

Near the end of our feature section (pages 66 and 67) you'll encounter an essay that may surprise you at first. In it, British-American critic Mark Steyn argues strongly that Americans are the Western world's natural traditionalists. Europeans, meanwhile, despite the patina of ancient castles and old concertos, have become unmoored from their roots. The consequences of this, Steyn demonstrates, have been tragic for European societies.

There is reason to believe that societal traditions, and the habits they impart in a people, are actually more important now than ever before. The key to success in the future will be what economists describe cooly as "human capital"—the productive habits and personal disciplines accumulated within a citizenry. Our present day is characterized by a declining significance of things material and a great upswing in the importance of capacities of mind and soul. Lodes of ore and inches of fertile loam have little bearing on a nation's prosperity and influence anymore. Riches are now measured in human attitudes and aptitudes—things heavily influenced by tradition.

The importance of tradition to societal success is perhaps the most profound point that philosopher and economist Friedrich Hayek made in his writings. Tradition, he explains, is not something arbitrary, mindless, or accidental. Rather, it is *the hard-won product of millions of human trials and millions of human errors.* It is a kind of science, a series of valuable verdicts that have evolved directly from lived life.

As civilization progressed, Hayek writes, "learnt moral rules and customs progressively displaced innate responses, not because men recognized by reason that they were better but because they made possible the growth of an extended order exceeding anyone's vision." Traditions evolved, in other words, because they caused their practitioners to prosper. Hayek further explains that:

> Learning how to behave is more the *source* than the *result* of insight, reason, and understanding. Man is not born wise, rational and good, but has to be taught to become so. It is not our intellect that created our morals; rather, human interactions governed by our morals make possible the growth of reason and those capabilities associated with it. Man became intelligent because there was *tradition*—that which lies between instinct and reason—for him to learn. This tradition, in turn, originated not from a capacity rationally to interpret observed facts but from habits of responding. It told man primarily what he ought or ought not to do under certain conditions.

This is not some thundering moralist I am quoting, but the premier modern defender of individual liberty. And his is an extremely important point, particularly for twentieth-century Americans who are regularly told that anything more than one generation old must be out of date and worthless.

In 1948, the great English historian Christopher Dawson observed that "the world of my childhood is already as far away from the contemporary world as it was from the world of the middle ages, and there is a danger that whole ranges of experience will be so lost that in the future they may be inaccessible." One wonders what Dawson would think of the breathtaking rate at which we've discarded "whole ranges of experience" in the years *since* 1948.

As bigger and bigger chunks of traditional Western culture are jettisoned, Dawson warned, many people end up feeling "culturally naked in an alien world." He went on to suggest that modern Westerners could end up imperiled in this way, just as American Indians were after they became detached from their traditional culture following the European deluge.

Without much question, our culture, morality, and domestic life are in trouble today, with many signs of serious breakdown. Part of the problem is that repair is so arduous. To borrow James Webb's clipped formulation from page 48: "It takes 300 years to build a tradition and three days to destroy one." How, in an era like ours, can the essential traditional knowledge that our predecessors distilled out of centuries of hard human experience be kept alive?

Tradition can, I believe, continue to be honored and protected in America, and without requiring Americans to withdraw too much from modernity. Sometimes, in fact, modernity can be harnessed to extend and even amplify tradition. Small examples of this might include moviemaking bringing old history to life, improved recording technology making once-disappeared music available again, or new book-marketing channels disseminating classic works that were previously available only to residents of a few big cities.

Or consider the heavy use many homeschoolers now make of computers. Homeschoolers are often people who have chosen, at some level, to step off the modern merry-go-round. In trying to create for their children something different from the MTV blur that childhood has now become in many American homes, homeschoolers look to earlier traditions for direction. In my own family we use a popular homeschool curriculum that I like to describe as a breath of fresh air directly from the nineteenth century. It is the type of Great Books and basic-knowledge course of study that was the norm in this country two generations ago, but unfortunately has become quite rare today. My son is currently reading *Famous Men of Rome* (copyright 1904, revised 1989). His *Child's History of the World* was written in 1924 (and updated several times since), and is vastly superior to any more recent text I have seen on the subject. It is kept in print solely by a special arrangement with homeschoolers. Because

continued on page 71

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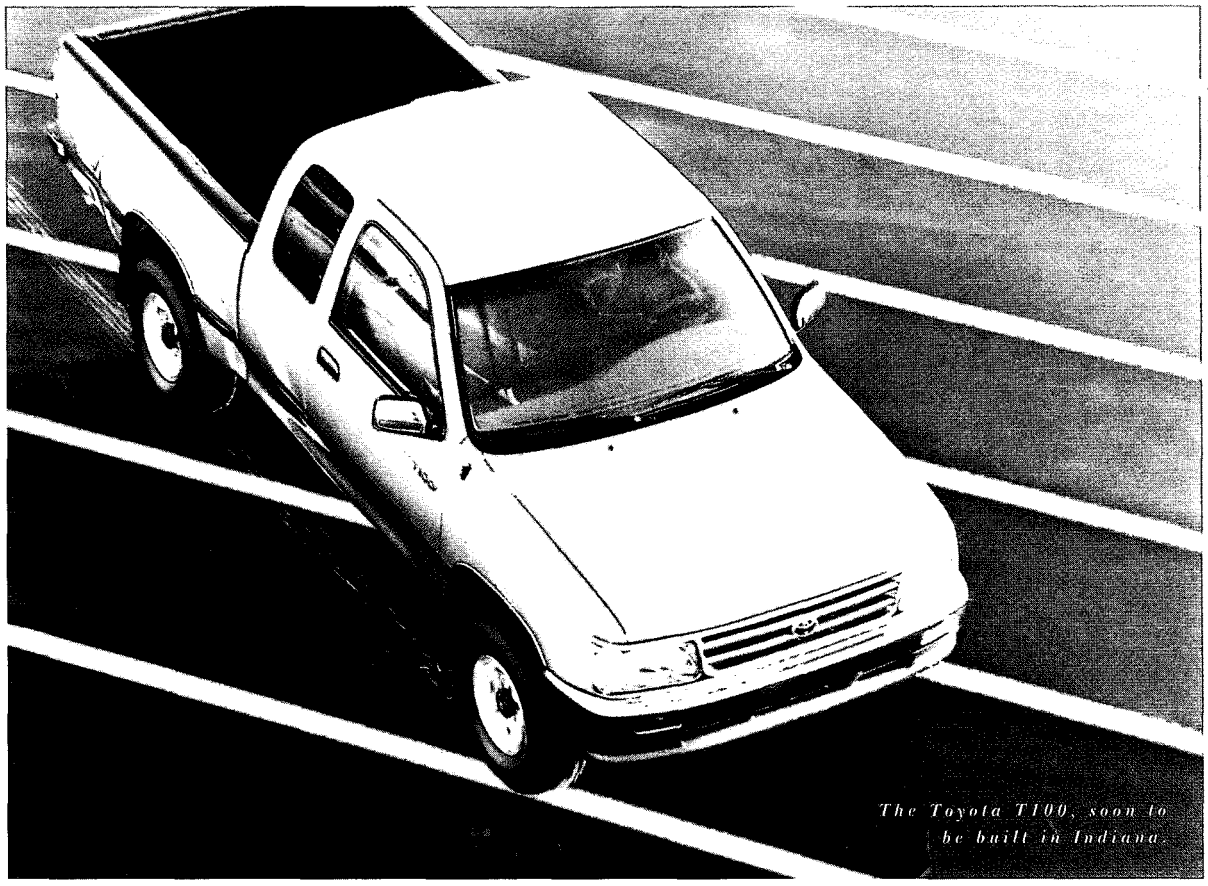

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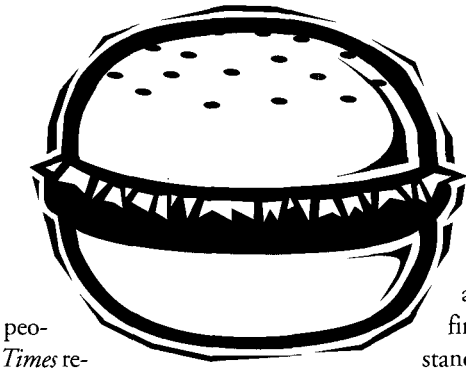
Sidelights



Two beers for the newly single: Royal Divorce Ale from England ("The taste? Bitter.") and Alimony Ale from California ("It's irreconcilably different"). · · · Nashville's Bongo Coffee Shop proudly displays a cinnamon roll that bears a striking resemblance to Mother **Teresa**. (No word on whether anyone is flocking to buns resembling her nemesis, **Christopher Hitchens**.) · · · McDonald's first non-beef restaurant opened in India, featuring the Maharaja Mac. ❧ Tax cuts will be "at the top of our agenda" says the incoming Senate Finance Chairman, while the President, asked if he foresees tax hikes, replies, "No." · · · Two weeks after the last election, Americans told Survey USA they prefer across-the-board tax cuts to "targeted" tax cuts by 66 to 28 percent, but they also thought any tax cuts unlikely. ❧ The Girl Scouts must sell over 80,000 boxes of cookies to pay their liability insurance, says economist **Ralph Reiland**. ❧ The Centers for Disease Control say the three most frequently reported infectious diseases are sexually transmitted. STDs are responsible for 87 percent of the sickness caused by the top ten maladies. · · · A prescription drug that helps prevent genital herpes flare-ups is now being advertised in several general circulation magazines. · · · Pro-choice Sen. **Arlen Specter** (R-Pa.) says that "with abortion being such a divisive issue in this country, there's one thing we can agree on, which is abstinence." · · · According to its annual report for 1995-96, Planned Parenthood saw its number of clinics drop by 38, its staff and volunteers fall by 4,000, and its birth-control customers and sex education participants decline, yet its total income rose 5 percent, largely on the strength of a $9 million rise in federal funding. ❧ North Carolina parents are appalled by an election worksheet given to fifth-graders that says Democrats "stand up for the poor, factory workers, farmers, women, and minorities," while Republicans "watch out for owners of large businesses…and wealthy people," the *Washington Times* reports. Principal **Tim Ellengerger** said he's satisfied there was "no political bias" in the worksheet.

President **Clinton**'s honeymoon is likely to last as long as **Michael Jackson**'s, warns political scientist **Norman Ornstein**. · · · Professional misanthrope **Florence King** predicts Clinton will not face trials on **Paula Jones**' suit or the Whitewater affair because "he'll talk us all to death and **Ken Starr** and the Supremes know it. If he starts testifying, it'll be like an inaugural address without end and we'll all go mad." ❧ **Ralph Nader** praises Republican budget hawk **John Kasich** of Ohio: "He's leading the fight against corporate welfare. There's no Democrat leading the fight.… We're talking about $200 billion." · · · The *Wall Street Journal* scores Nader "hypocrite of the year" for failing to release his tax returns, donor lists, or income, while his Green Party made "independent expenditures" on behalf of his presidential campaign. ❧ Prize-winning composer-organist **Frederick Stocken** calls himself "Britain's most backward-looking composer," embraces traditional melody and Thatcherism, and abhors government arts subsidies. The 29-year-old musician also founded "The Hecklers" to encourage boos at concerts of "modernist plink-plonk." ❧ Geneticists have discovered strong evidence that Jewish men thought to be descended from **Aaron**, **Moses**'s older brother, "may indeed be members" of a single lineage passed down from father to son that has "endured for thousands of years," the *New York Times* reports. ❧ Nature apparently abhors a macho vacuum: The bluehead wrasse fish can change from female to male, especially if "dominant males" are scarce. · · · "What many women want is simply a more subtle and refined version of a double standard: We want men to be the providers and to regard us as equals," writes revisionist feminist **Kate Roiphe**. ❧ Saying "crime is a state and local issue," former attorney general **Edwin Meese** complains that "although the Constitution gave Congress jurisdiction over only three crimes, now there are more than 3,000 federal crimes on the books," including "disrupting a rodeo." ❧ Economist **Julian R. Betts** studied the educational effects of class size, teachers' advanced degrees and experience, parents' education and socioeconomic status, and 30 minutes of extra homework. Not only did additional homework bring the most benefits, but A students gained as much as D students.

"A lot of the rap they have out here is filthy, and I don't think music should be filthy," says **Ray Charles**. "I'll never make a record like that. Never, as long as I live." · · · "The reason we cannot get smut or vagrants off the streets is not because of the Constitution but because of the judges. Censorship of such pornography and the arrest of vagrants was permitted for generations under the Constitution," writes economist **Thomas Sowell**. · · · Wal-Mart has been attacked for refusing to stock records it considers obscene. A spokesman asks, "Newspapers will not print certain words. How many of the lyrics we won't accept would be printed in the newspapers that call us 'censors'?" ❧ In Georgia, a robber beat a motel security guard to death with a Bible. ❧ **Colin Powell** recently quipped that President Clinton's *Between Hope and History* is being sold "as a fire log." The *Washington Post* added that the book's current wholesale price of $1.50 makes it "cheaper than good kindling."

—*SW*

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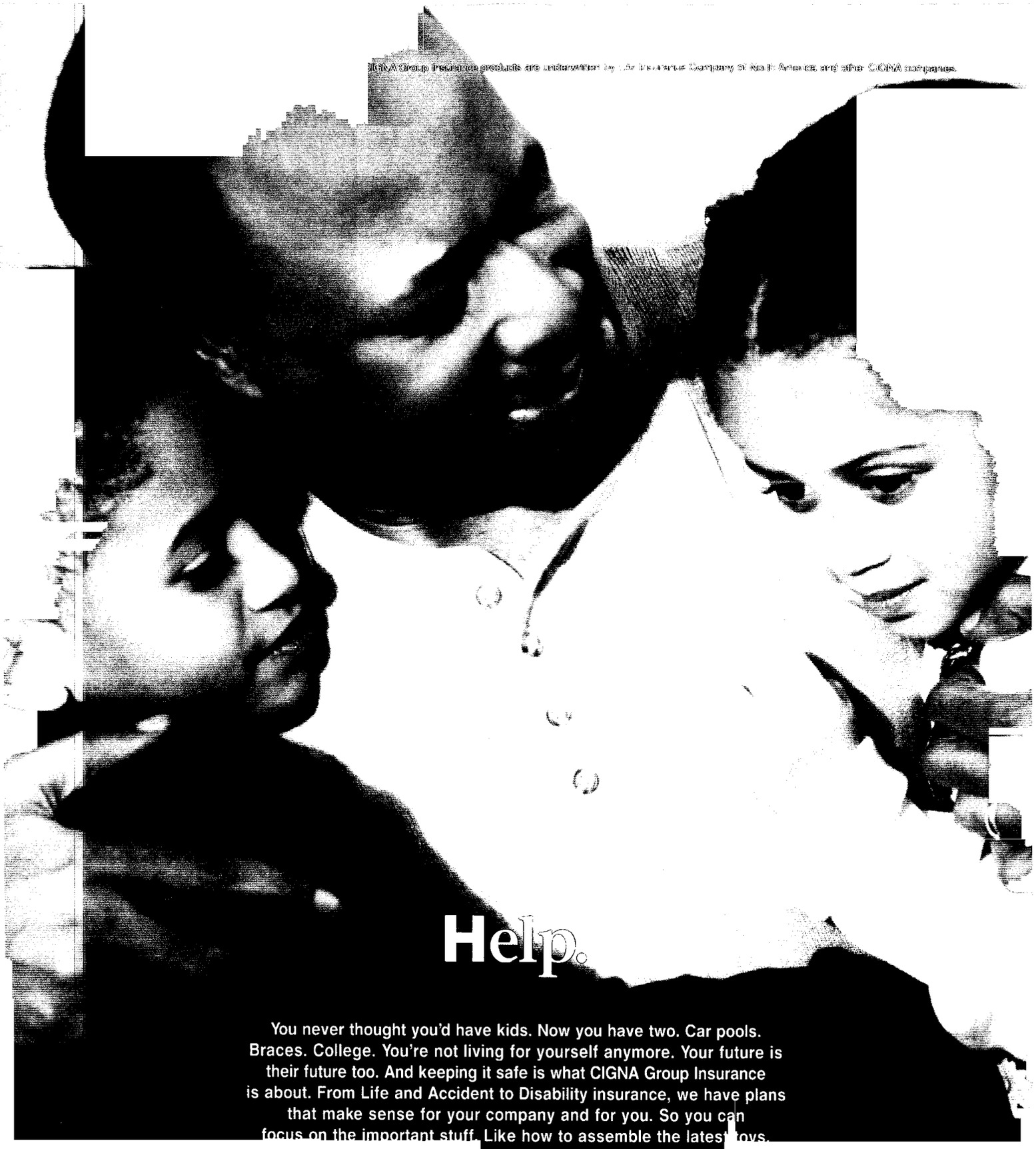

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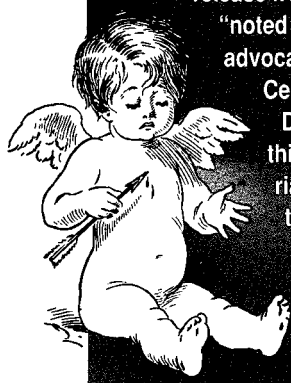
SCAN

AH, MODERN LOVE



This magazine is scheduled to be in readers' hands on February 14, and we just received a deeply romantic news release from a Bronx lawyer. Describing herself as a "noted divorce attorney and women's rights advocate," and we don't doubt that for a second, Cecile C. Weich notes that "with Valentine's Day quickly approaching, couples may be thinking of taking their relationship into marriage." *But wait, she shouts!* Don't you dare try that without a prenuptial agreement:

"1. Each party should get a full disclosure of the intended's assets and net worth. It is important that you have an accurate picture of your future spouse's financial profile.

"2. Get your own lawyer, not one recommended by your fiance.... Your attorney should act in your best interest at every point of the negotiations."

Just think of the trouble Romeo and Juliet could have avoided with a little legal representation.

UNSPORTING QUOTAS

Syracuse University has had a wrestling team since 1922. In January, the university announced it is dropping the sport.

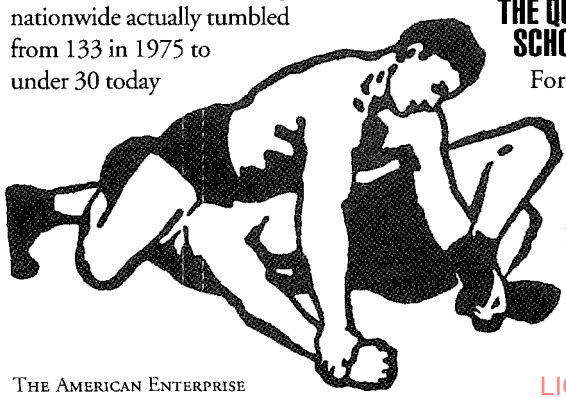
Uncompetitive? Lack of student interest? Nope. S.U. wrestlers have been nationally ranked at different times in recent years, and in 1989 the university built a $4 million gymnasium specifically for wrestling.

There is only one reason the team is being discarded: federal Title IX regulations that leave colleges open to civil rights lawsuits if they don't equalize male and female sports participation and expenditures on campus. Syracuse is dumping wrestling, and also men's gymnastics, so that it can add women's softball, women's soccer, and women's lacrosse. The university will then have 12 women's sports and nine men's sports. (The school's big-time football and basketball programs are so expensive it takes more women's teams to balance the scales.)

The Syracuse story is just the tip of an iceberg. Notre Dame also killed its wrestling team to add two new women's sports. In 1993, Princeton dropped men's wrestling to add a women's water polo team. A group of alums offered to pay for the sport privately, but the university refused the $2.3 million because reinstating the program would upset the proportion of male to female athletes. The number of men's gymnastic teams nationwide actually tumbled from 133 in 1975 to under 30 today in order to meet Title IX requirements.

Meanwhile, women's teams have been created so fast many are undersubscribed. At a time when most Brown University women's teams were not even filled, federal judge Raymond Pettine forced the school to remove more than 40 men from teams in order to "balance" opportunities. At that point, Brown already offered 15 varsity sports for women versus 13 for men, but Judge Pettine deemed it unacceptable that only 38 percent of all the athletes on campus were women. "Judge Pettine has made Title IX a quota law," said Brown athletic director David Roach.

Federal law insists that all imbalances in sports activities between men and women result from discrimination. The possibility that men and women might place different demands on athletic departments cannot legally be considered under federal law. Meanwhile, in Brown's intramural sports program, where there are no limits or barriers to participation, eight times as many males take part as females.



THE QUIET REVOLUTION IN SCHOOL CHOICE

For decades, children from inner cities have usually had two alternatives—go to the local public school or drop out. Then in 1991, J. Patrick Rooney, head of Indianapolis-based Golden Rule Insurance, came up with another alternative—the privately funded school voucher. Rooney and some other Indianapolis businessmen created a charitable trust that pays half of a student's tuition to a private school if his or her parents will pay the other half.

Private vouchers have spread rapidly across America. According to the National Scholarship Center, which tracks the private voucher movement, private vouchers supported 9,850 students in 29 cities and two states during the 1995-96 school year, in places as big as Los Angeles and Chicago and as small as Battle Creek, Michigan, and Midland, Texas. So far in these first few years, businessmen have invested more than $30 million in over 12,000 children through their privately funded school choice programs, with an additional 18,000 children already on existing waiting lists.

Now the private scholarship movement will get a big boost from New York City. In early February, a team of New York philanthropists headed by investor Bruce Kovner announced the creation of the School Choice Scholarships Foundation, which has raised private funding to award scholarships worth up to $1,400 annually to 1,000 poverty-level families in the city. Elementary school children now in poorly functioning public schools can use these scholarships to attend any private school (that sum will cover nearly all of the tuition at most Catholic schools, for instance), with a minimum

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commitment from the foundation of three years' worth of support. Other members of the board include former New York Gov. Hugh Carey, Rep. Floyd Flake (D-N.Y.), financier Richard Gilder, philanthropist Peter Flanigan, investor Thomas Tisch, former Citibank president Walter Wriston, and *National Review* president Dusty Rhodes.

"We are doing this because of the importance of making choice available to kids who don't have real alternatives," Kovner says. "The public school system hasn't provided good opportunities for these kids; so we think the private schools should be given a chance to help out." The Foundation, which expects to expand in the future, announced its plans at a news conference held jointly with New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Kovner says the group has arranged for Harvard schools researcher Paul Peterson to do a thorough analysis of how well these inner-city kids do in private schools. Scholarship winners will be chosen by a random lottery, and plans are being made to compare the academic achievement of the children who get the scholarships with identical counterparts who aren't selected and so stay in public schools. This rigorous assessment mechanism will set the New York City program apart from other efforts around the country, and can be expected to provide strong evidence on whether school choice could help other disadvantaged kids do better in school.

Meanwhile, 1,000 low-income children and their parents will have immediate new educational opportunities. Kovner believes that giving these parents fresh economic options will help them become more responsible. "Low-income families' power to control their own destiny has been eroded by the public school monopoly. We hope that putting choices in the hands of these people will be an important part of the solution to our educational problems. We expect that communities will start more schools, open up fresh capacities that aren't even there now, and sign up for the job of increasing educational opportunities in their lives."

Just two months earlier, another private scholarship program was announced in New York state, this one to operate in Albany with funding from investor Virginia Gilder. The program, "A Better Choice," offers every student in grades 1-6 at Albany's worst public school an annual scholarship of up to $1,000, for as long as they need to complete elementary school.

One reason for this accelerating activism by private funders is the clear failure of the last decade's public-school reform movement to produce positive results. A just-released report from the National Education Goals Panel, set up by the nation's governors in 1989 to measure and encourage educational improvements, shows continuing decline in U.S. public schools. Over the last five years, their *Goals Report* finds, "national performance has improved in five areas and declined in seven."

Business people have sensed this for some time. A Louis Harris poll that asked U.S. employers how effectively current students are learning found that only 22 percent of employers feel today's entrants to the workforce know math well, that just 12 percent find that new hires can write well, and that a mere 10 percent believe graduates know how to solve complex problems. Only 30 percent of employers ranked the overall educational preparedness of current students as positive.

Alarmed by these realities, some progressive businessmen and women have begun to take direct action to rescue students in their own cities from incompetent public school monopolies. But of course these philanthropic efforts, though noble, can only reach a small fraction of the next generation. The nation's best hope may be that as these private scholarship programs operate over a period of years and produce results among the nation's most disadvantaged populations, the message will sink in: All American children and parents should have the freedom and opportunity to choose the school that is best for them.

WE'RE ALL AMERICANS

Asked about Ebonics while she was in Washington for the inaugural, Whoopi Goldberg replied that the "idea that we as black people are not part of this country...is a concept that we have to get over. That's why we can't define ourselves as African-Americans. We're not. We're Americans. That's why Rosa Parks was on the bus. That's why Martin Luther King and Medgar Evers were fighting to make sure that everyone remembers we were Americans, not African-Americans, not Asian-Americans. We are Americans. Therefore we are obligated to speak this language, which is ours."

THE CAROL REBELLION OF 1996

For as long as anyone can remember, Dartmouth College has erected a large Christmas tree on its central green each December. As the lights of the tree are turned on, the Dartmouth Glee Club serenades the crowd with Christmas carols. Until this past December.

This year the Dartmouth administration told the Glee Club that no religious carols were to be sung. The operative ideology was "multiculturalism." The assumption behind the administration's directive was that Asian, Jewish, Muslim, and agnostic students could be offended by such an outrage as "Silent Night."

2000 YEARS OF WHAT?

Concerned that Year 2000 celebrations being planned in Britain to mark the close of the Christian era's second millennium are becoming too materialistic, the Prince of Wales and the Archbishop of Canterbury have begun pressing for a greater "appreciation of the event's spiritual aspects." The centerpieces of the British government's millennial preparations so far are a giant ferris wheel on London's South Bank, sponsored by British Airways, and a £400 million commercial exhibition. The Archbishop is strongly urging that there be a Christian element inside the exhibition, and not just sales displays. His efforts follow on a strong positive response from the public last year after Prince Charles wrote a newspaper article urging greater acknowledgement of the spiritual context of the 2000th anniversary.

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As a longtime professor at Dartmouth, I can testify that no such students would be offended by anything of the kind. The Dartmouth administration, under the leadership of President James Freedman, has merely gone into the business of creating occasions for "offense." A student who is "offended" can be richly rewarded, while "offenders" risk harsh punishment. Yale Professor Harold Bloom has aptly characterized the official culture of universities today as a "party of resentment." You had better not say, or indeed think, anything that might offend anyone.

So, at Dartmouth, as the lights on the tree went on last month, the Glee Club struggled with "Frosty the Snowman" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." But there is a happier twist to this story. For the next day, normality rebelled against the culture of resentment. Glee Club members—acting informally and as individuals—conducted the first rebellious concert in Dartmouth history.

Despite final exams and a blinding snowstorm, club members gathered around the tree and sang unofficially. Word had spread through the campus grapevine, and as the singers gathered around the tree, some 300 students joined them in singing Christmas carols. In four-part harmony they performed such really "offensive" songs as "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing," and "Silent Night." As the expert Glee Club members and their fellow students sang, they eventually linked arms, and then swayed gently with the rhythms. A strong snowstorm swirled around them.

It is possible that in today's culture of resentment on campus, those who sang that night will be penalized in some way. They dared to sing songs they liked. They might be expelled from the official Glee Club. They might be required to take "sensitivity training."

Regardless, one truth will still remain: The culture of resentment and negation cannot possibly prevail over the culture of normality and joy.

—Syndicated columnist ***Jeffrey Hart*** *taught English at Dartmouth.*

JUMPING OFF THE GRAVY TRAIN

During the past election season, candidates from both parties stressed that they favored increased "government investment" in education. Some educators, however, have announced they're not interested in federal largesse—and the strings that come with it.

Grove City College, a small liberal arts school in northwestern Pennsylvania, withdrew from all direct federal aid programs in 1984 so it wouldn't be subject to government control. Just recently, it took another step to free itself from the tentacles of the U.S. Department of Education: It became the first school to opt out of the federal student loan program. According to John Moore, Grove City's president, the decision was made "so that we could stay independent of federal regulations and pursue our mission the way we want to do it. We did not want to be bound by what the feds think."

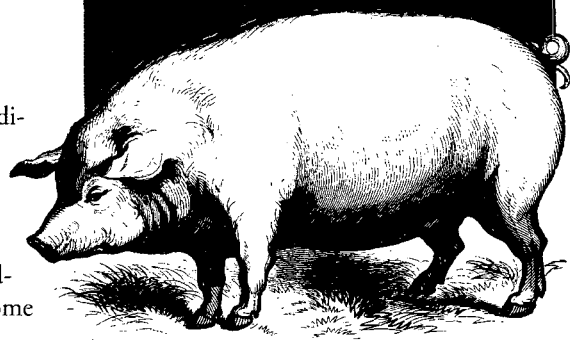
Federal bureaucrats, he explained, planned to require the college to sign a "program participation agreement, which is a complex document that refers to six different federal statutes, including statutes that govern programs that we do not participate in, such as the Pell Grant program." Since 1984, Grove City had been allowed to amend the agreement so that it would be subject only to the regulations governing the loan program it participated in, but this year the Clinton Education Department would not allow that. In addition, regulators were demanding voluminous financial statements. Grove City said, "Enough!"

Students will be permitted to continue participating in federal loan programs for this academic year. But beginning in the fall of 1997, Grove City students taking out loans will do so through a privately financed program underwritten by the PNC Bank. Under this new "Freedom Student Loan Program," students may borrow up to $7,500 annually, compared to the $4,000 the government currently allows.

Grove City could establish the private loan program in part because fewer than 4 percent of its students have previously defaulted on their college loans. Schools with less impressive default rates would have a harder time coming to similar agreements

TO HERBIE, WHO GAVE ME STRENGTH

In the acknowledgments to his new book, *Animal Rights and Wrongs*, English philosopher Roger Scruton thanks various two-legged friends. He then acknowledges his debts to "Puck, who guards the gate; to George, Sam, and Rollo who live in the stables; to the nameless carp in the pond across the field; to the cows next door; and to Herbie, who has now been eaten."



CREATIVE ACTS ON CAMPUS

Having long entertained ourselves with campus news, we weren't especially surprised to hear that a 44-year-old State University of New York professor had been charged with handcuffing, blindfolding, and then choking a student with a rope placed around his neck. Nor that the activity was part of what the professor characterized as a "role-playing game." Nor that professor and student both agreed that this "role-playing" would take place in lieu of the 19-year-old writing a 20-page term paper. Nor that both professor and student were male.

What really surprised us was Professor Scott Isaksen's area of academic expertise. He is reported to be Director of Buffalo State's "Center for Studies in Creativity."

We definitely went to college in the wrong era. Or maybe not.

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with private lenders. President Moore points out that this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Currently, many government loans are "almost guaranteed to fail. So what it becomes is just a straightforward subsidy program." A private loan program does not allow this kind of deception and defaulting of responsibility.

Michigan's Hillsdale College is also phasing out participation in federal student loan programs, and Moore says he has "received several inquiries from other schools." Where there are brave administrators and banks, federal domination of higher education can be curtailed.

*—**Aaron Steelman** is a staff writer at the Cato Institute.*

ENDANGERED SHAKESPEARE

A new study by the National Alumni Forum shows that many of the nation's leading colleges no longer require even English majors to study Shakespeare. Among the 70 top schools surveyed, only 23 retain Shakespeare requirements for literature students.

These findings did not rattle the Ivory Tower. William Cook, chairman of Dartmouth's English department (which has dropped its Shakespeare requirements) shrugged the study off with the comment that "We must not deify Shakespeare." Many current academic luminaries, like former Modern Language Association president Houston Baker of the University of Pennsylvania, argue that literary quality is simply a matter of personal taste. You like Milton. I dig Toni Morrison.

Ironically, the marginalization of Shakespeare comes just as the playwright is at peak favor on the silver screen. Film critic Michael Medved points out that "Shakespeare is the most popular screenwriter in Hollywood." Recent films have included three popular Shakespeare adaptations by Kenneth Branagh, plus Mel Gibson's *Hamlet,* plus new interpretations of *Romeo and Juliet, Twelfth Night,* and *Richard III.*

If the trend continues, it could make for a peculiar circumstance: elite college English majors may have to go to the movie theater to complete their education.

*—**Evan Gahr** is a columnist for the* New York Post.

NEBRASKANS REIN IN A JUDGE

In a recent essay in the journal *First Things* on the threat that runaway judges pose to American democracy, William Bennett worries about the lack of public outrage when courts overrule the clear will of the people.

Millions of California voters have had their popular mandates on immigration (Proposition 187) and affirmative action (the CCRI) canceled out by the disdain of two federal judges. Coloradans spoke clearly when they passed an amendment to their state constitution that banned special rights for homosexuals, but a few Supreme Court justices refused to listen. Other courts have taken over micromanagement of prisons and school districts, refused to allow school choice laws to take effect, insisted on state sanctioning of gay "marriage" in the face of strong public disapproval, banned public expressions of religion, voided a popular referendum against doctor-assisted suicide, suspended legislatively passed limits on Internet and cable TV porn, and otherwise frustrated the public will. Several judges have thrown out democratically enacted term limits. The question is, why doesn't the public rise up and bite back?

The first answer is that people feel helpless. After all, how *does* one answer back at an out-of-control federal judge? The courts have snatched up powers traditionally under the purview of elected legislators (and many "progressive" legislators have been only too happy to acquiesce, because they've discovered that many of their pet causes can only become law by judicial fiat). Average people, told by their representatives that matters are "beyond their control," feel helpless and become resigned to the idea that their opinions no longer matter.

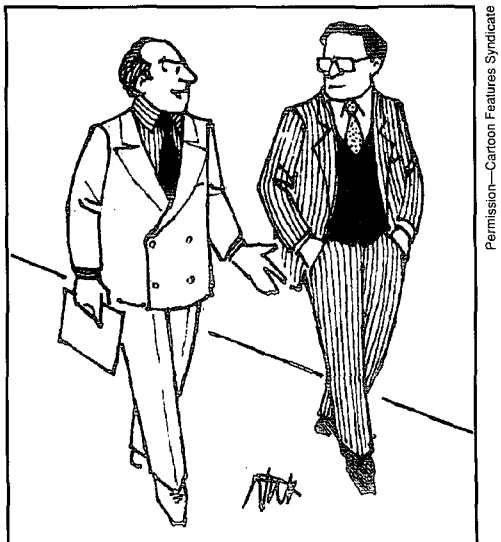
But there is a second answer to the question of why the public doesn't rise up—and that is that sometimes it *does,* where it is able. Take recent events in Nebraska, where citizen outrage sent a Supreme Court judge who had forgotten the proper role of the courts hunting for a new job.

As I described earlier in this space (see SCAN, May/June 1996), the Nebraska Supreme Court, in a 4-3 unsigned opinion, decided that it didn't like the way the Nebraska legislature had defined second-degree murder. As a result, 130 murder convictions dating back 15 years were overturned, even though the Nebraska state constitution explicitly grants the legislature the right to define crime in the state. The Supreme Court made up its ruling out of whole cloth and was not the least bit interested in the fierce objections of the legislature, the Attorney General, or other elected representatives of the people.

The Nebraska Supreme Court also recently overturned (twice) successful petition drives and public votes to impose term limits on Nebraska public officials.

Fortunately, Nebraska is one of 16 states in the country that periodically allow citizens to vote on whether their judges should be retained. (The ballot is not a contested race, but simply a yes/no vote on leaving the individual on the bench.) David Lanphier, a judge who had taken part in overturning both the murder convictions and term limits, had the misfortune of facing his retention vote last November.

The campaign to oust him was a true grassroots effort, led by an Omaha resident and term limits backer who raised nearly $150,000 in small donations for the purpose. The liberal establishment was horrified, naturally, by the prospect of one of their "statesmen" being unseated by some *hoi polloi.* The national president of the American Bar Association dropped by Omaha to lecture Cornhuskers on the way their judiciary should be run. Major media warned against letting the riff-raff run things. Former Omaha Congressman



Permission—Cartoon Features Syndicate

"Let's make sure that if there's a return to morality, we get a piece of the action."

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John Cavanaugh, who headed up the committee supporting Justice Lanphier, preached at length about keeping tawdry politics out of the judiciary (a sermon that ought to have been delivered instead to the state Supreme Court before it decided to act as a legislature).

Nebraskans are a commonsensical lot, and they know hogwash when they hear it. In November, they threw Lanphier out, quite adamantly, by 68 to 32 percent.

There were also rumblings of popular discontent with the courts out in Hawaii last November, where a right to gay marriage is about to be forced on the state by judges, despite overwhelming opposition by the public. A state constitutional convention was approved, laying the groundwork to overturn the state Supreme Court if it persists. Several legislators who obstructed efforts to keep the court out of this issue were also defeated.

The American people are clear-sighted and brave enough to know when their judicial mandarins need to be brought to heel. Defenders of democratic decision-making on society's toughest questions ought to concentrate now on helping the public apply the necessary sharp jerks to the collar chains of our judges.

*—**Blake Hurst** writes regularly for* The American Enterprise *from Tarkio, Missouri.*

LARRY FLYNT VS. FREE SPEECH

Critics are lining up to worship the new film *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, many of them treating it as a wonderful civics lesson on the First Amendment. Produced by Oliver Stone, the film has already received several prizes, including two Golden Globes (where the script writer publicly thanked "Larry Flynt for living the life"), and will come up for Academy Awards as well.

But while the movie lifts up Flynt as a champion of free speech, Flynt's daughter Tonya Flynt-Vega says he has resorted to threats of violence to try to prevent her from exercising her own free speech rights to tell another side of his story. Flynt-Vega, 31, told TAE in a recent interview that her father threatened "to wring my neck and have me killed" if she published a book about her upbringing. These warnings frightened her out of completing a book sale. Flynt-Vega says her father also threatened her life when he was in jail, and that she took him seriously because "my father has bodyguards who carry machine guns, and because he is a millionaire he has enough money to put out a murder contract on someone's life."

The film suggests that Flynt has suffered persecution at the hands of Christian conservatives simply for believing that God made *every* part of a woman's body beautiful. Flynt-Vega says, "What my father does is not about beauty, it's about degrading women. My father loves to degrade women. He degraded his daughters verbally when we were children and literally kept chains and locks on our refrigerator because he said he 'didn't want to have any fat daughters.'"

Flynt-Vega reports that "My father sexually abused me when I was a child. When my sister and I used to visit him, he would have us dress up in strippers' clothes and dance for him. And when I was ten years old, my father committed sexual acts on me." Flynt-Vega notes that her father's *Hustler* magazine has shown pictures of "severed women's body parts, women being put through a meat grinder, women having sex with animals, and naked women being tortured in crucifixion positions."

The People vs. Larry Flynt is a carefully crafted piece of propaganda. Audiences feel appropriately claustrophobic in the close-up jail sequences, and appropriately exultant when Flynt's lawyer wins his case in front of the Supreme Court. The background music swells to a crescendo of heavenly orchestration in a moment intended to make audiences feel proud.

No Oliver Stone-produced film would be complete without the hint of a government conspiracy. The federal government, it's suggested, backed the man who shot and paralyzed Flynt because they wanted to silence him. One reason the government was mad at Flynt, supposedly, was that he published an ad offering a million dollars for information leading to the true killer of President Kennedy.

But Flynt's only real interest, says Flynt-Vega, is making money by debasing women. "As a woman and a born-again Christian I must speak out against this," she says. "If people speak out against pornography because it is degrading and promotes the abuse of women, it doesn't mean they are against the First Amendment or against sex," she adds.

One wonders if any prominent Hollywood producer or director will ever have the courage to make a film telling the other side of the Larry Flynt story—through the eyes of his daughter.

*—**Dave Geisler** writes often on movies from Los Angeles.*

THIS SOUNDS SERIOUS

We recently received a sober black invitation to attend a major briefing at the National Press Club on a new "national crisis." One that "continues to grow to alarming proportions in this country."

You unfeeling readers lacking the finely tuned pain-sensing antennae of Washington, D.C.'s caring class may not even be aware that we currently need "a public health initiative to solve the country's calcium crisis." That's right, a calcium crisis. Can you imagine any advanced European government leaving its people exposed to a risk like that?

And though it doesn't say anything about this on our press invitation, we're just betting that *children* (and women!) are where this calcium crisis and *plight* really get together.

"Close the Calcium Gap" our invitation urges, urgently, in its closing line.

With federal maternity-stay laws finally in place, could this become Bill Clinton's next big issue?

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RAPPING ON RAP

From a lively discussion of Charles Murray's new book, What It Means to be a Libertarian, *held recently at the American Enterprise Institute:*

Charles Murray: You want to prohibit rap music? By law?

Robert Bork (author of *Slouching Towards Gomorrah):* The kinds of lyrics that talk about the sexual degradation and violation of women, the shooting of policemen, and so forth—you think that's swell? You think it has impacts on society?

Murray: Yes, I do, and I think the Bill Bennetts of the world are doing exactly the right thing. But I think that to say, "To deal with this, we got to have a law" is the same mindset as that of the Left which says, "There's social injustice and bigotry, we got to have a law." …And the trouble with that mindset is that far too often it's not people like you…but other folks who get control of the police power.

…I have every confidence in the Bill Bennetts of the world to rescue civilization from these degraded lyrics. They are not eating away at the foundations of American culture. They are—sorry, Bob—they are a pinprick. They are the kind of thing that lead us to react in ways which are far graver than the damage they do.

Bork: We have on the Internet endless amounts of pornography, including incitements and instructions on pedophilia, how to kidnap little girls, and so forth. Sure, they are a million pinpricks, and they add up to a lot of bleeding.

LEAVING WELFARE BEHIND

In a January 20 interview with the *Washington Times,* two academic experts report that New Jersey's "family cap" welfare reform enacted three years ago is proving "surprisingly successful." According to Ted Goertzel and Gary Young, since the state stopped paying welfare mothers for additional births, their birthrate in New Jersey has fallen by 20 percent. Total welfare caseloads have also fallen by 9 percent, as more single mothers seek out jobs. "Women are no longer certain that AFDC will be there to support them throughout their childrearing years," note Goertzel and Young. "This uncertainty affects their childbearing and vocational decision-making." The new federal welfare law with its mandatory five-year time limit should accelerate this attitude shift, say the researchers.

ONE MAN, ONE VOTE, ONE VOICE

How many black spokesmen, or everyday black citizens, have you ever seen on TV or read about in large newspapers or magazines expressing opposition to affirmative action. Very few to none, right?

But of course that's just because all blacks are in favor of affirmative action, right? Wrong.

Nearly one out of three black Californians voted for CCRI, the California Civil Rights Initiative that would outlaw race preferences.

Probably you've just always been out in the kitchen getting a bowl of pretzels whenever those guys were interviewed on camera.

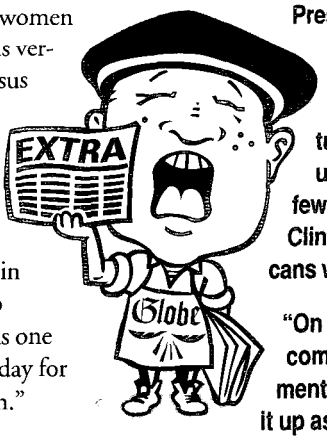
THE "OPPRESSION SWEEPSTAKES"

Reviewing the schisms within the contemporary feminist movement—white women versus women of color, heterosexuals versus lesbians, women of privilege versus poor women—Daphne Patai writes in a recent issue of *Partisan Review* that "I believe this jostling for place creates so much tension within feminism that it is barely able to sustain itself as a movement in which separate identity groups keep speaking to one another. But there is one thing that, apparently, can save the day for them all, and that is hostility to men."

ALMA MATER TRADITION

In the feature section of this magazine, we take a long, hard look at tradition. Recently, *Weekly Standard* editor Fred Barnes described one little military-academy ritual that illustrates nicely the odd power of tradition to move us: "I went to the Army-Navy game in Philadelphia last December, and I won't soon forget it. And not just the game.... What happened moments after the game was even more memorable. Veterans Stadium suddenly went silent. The heartbroken Navy team, having lost to Army for the fifth straight year, gathered itself in front of the full brigade of midshipmen, and together, football players and coaches and Middies sang the Naval Academy alma mater. Then, after a brief burst of noise, the crowd quieted again. Smoke from cannons fired to celebrate Army's victory hung over the section of the stands where the entire corps of cadets was standing. Once the Army players collected in front, the West Point alma mater was sung. ...It was one of the...most exhilarating moments I've experienced in years of attending sports events.... A hard-hitting football game between traditional rivals, cadets and midshipmen (in uniform) standing throughout the game, the military brass in attendance, President Clinton seated for the first half on Navy's side, the second half on Army's. I loved it."

SOME GAFFES ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS



Remember how the press would pile on Vice President Dan Quayle or President George Bush every time they made a historical, grammatical, or factual goof in their public utterances? Well, a few months ago, Bill Clinton criticized Republicans with this construction:

"On the other side, they complain about government all the time. They set it up as the enemy; it's government versus the people. The last time I checked, the Constitution said, 'Of the people, by the people and for the people.' That's what the Declaration of Independence says."

Sorry, Mr. President, but you'd better check your government's founding documents again, because that phrase was invented a whole lifetime later, by Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address.

Funny what the media does and doesn't consider a hot potatoe, er, potato, from the mouth of a government leader.

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SAVE OUR CULTURE—BUY A SOUVENIR

On a recent trip to Disneyland, I was once again reminded that the place is a shopping mall with an amusement park attached. As I walked down Main Street U.S.A., I finally found something worth buying. A small sign announced silhouettes were for sale. I walked in and found Sylvia Fellows, who was very happy to make my portrait. All I had to do was sit still for a minute, while she snipped a profile with tiny scissors. Then her assistant mounted it on cardboard backing, and placed it in an oval frame.

Fellows wasn't too busy; so I talked to her for a bit about her craft. She explained that the original Monsieur Silhouette was a courtier who invented the artform in eighteenth-century France. She also told me that Disney is now the chief patron of silhouette artists, hiring about 50 of them to work at Disneyland, Walt Disney World, and Euro Disneyland.

I have no idea who in the Disney organization decided to hire silhouettemakers. It was probably the responsibility of a junior vice president, or perhaps it was one of Walt Disney's original decisions that no one bothered to change. But as I left Sylvia Fellows' shop, my opinion of Disney improved about 10 million percent. My silhouette was handmade, signed by the artist, and a work of traditional craft.

I also knew that my purchase was more than just a souvenir. It was a chance to do my part to bolster traditional art.

Conservatives rightly condemn much of what our culture produces as violent, nasty, and degrading. But they've never come up with a way to make sure that good art—art that celebrates and uplifts rather than disgusts—can replace bad art. Shaking a fist at Hollywood or Manhattan may be therapeutic, but it does little to help traditional art thrive.

Few of us have the millions needed to produce a film or underwrite a play. But all of us can spend a little more money buying the work of painters, sculptors, crafts people, or musicians we like. And doing so will aid traditional culture in several ways:

• *It encourages refinement.* People who buy promising first novels or early paintings give artists and writers the capital to create brilliant third novels and masterful later paintings, just as a few rich people who bought $5,000 VCRs or $800 pocket calculators ensured that a decade later everyone could buy $200 VCRs and $10 pocket calculators.

• *It makes the artist an entrepreneur, instead of a welfare recipient.* The fundamental problem with the National Endowment for the Arts is not that it funds art that is obscene or stupid, but that its existence rests on the doubtful premise that art is just another problem that needs subsidizing, like surplus cows or penniless single mothers. As Paul Johnson observes, artists "should be made to ferret around for a livelihood, insert themselves by their own efforts into the interstices of the market, turn their words and brushstrokes into pennies. Their work is all the better for being produced in anxiety and even want, by a combination of desperation, low cunning, and imprudent braggadocio."

• *It will restore tradition.* Our museums and arts publications are controlled by advocates of an aging, calcified "avant-garde" art that is often ugly, debased, politically correct, or weird. Since our highbrow elites are no longer capable of giving good advice, we middlebrows must use our own judgment to decide what art to buy. The good taste of millions of ordinary citizens would be far more constructive for our culture than the bad taste of the mandarins.

So don't feel guilty about buying that CD, portrait, sculpture, or novel. You aren't just buying that work for yourself. You're doing your part to ensure that traditional art, suppressed for nearly two generations, can once again thrive.

—Associate editor **Martin Morse Wooster** prefers his right to his left side.

STUBBORN CONSERVATIVES

Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform, interviewed in *Reason*, February 1997:

"For too many politicians, the promise that they are solid conservatives except on social issues is followed by the declaration that support for racial quotas is a social issue, property confiscation in the name of environmentalism is a social issue, gun control then becomes a social issue. [But] people who are willing to stick to a strong pro-life position aren't going to be pushed off a strong anti-tax position."

WHAT HARASSMENT?

In a January 23 statement reported in the *Washington Times*, feminist crusader Betty Friedan is surprisingly unperturbed by Paula Jones' charges against President Clinton:

"According to what she said, one could say if the President actually did proposition her, one could disapprove, it's boorish, one could hope Hillary can do something about it. But she [Paula Jones] said 'no.' She wasn't killed. She wasn't harassed. She wasn't fired. Her boss wasn't told to get rid of her."

We're wracking our brains trying to recall which of those things it was that happened to Anita Hill. Was she killed? Harassed? Fired? Can't recall, just now. We do remember, however, that no one ever pulled his pants down in front of her.

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SLOW DOWN AND SAVE A TRADITION

Here's a simple step any person can take to help traditional life survive: Slow down. Speed is the enemy of the permanent things. In nearly every case where something fast has replaced something slow, the result is a product or an action that is coarser than its replacement.

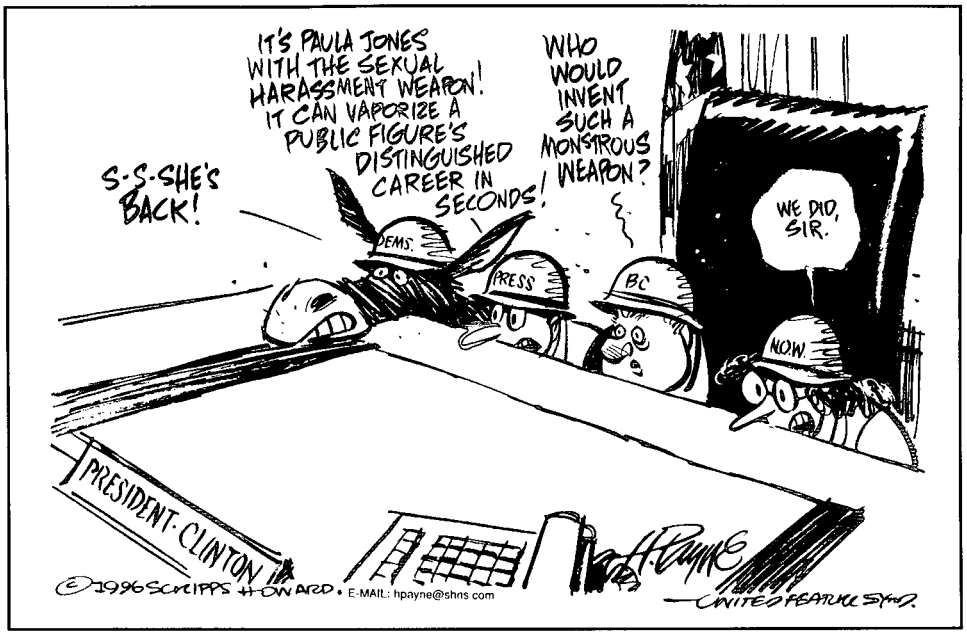
SLOW	FAST
home cooking	burgers
fidelity	one-night stands
newspapers	CNN
symphonies	MTV

Speedy products are popular for lots of reasons, including convenience and a perceived lack of time. But opinion is often shaped by a modern preference for novelty. The media constantly celebrate the "hot" and flashy rather than the cool and enduring. But a steady, slow pace is the best way to travel through many areas of life.

Finance: As AEI fellow James K. Glassman likes to note in his *Washington Post* finance column, slow investors do as well as fast ones. The buy-and-hold investor who picks some good stocks or mutual funds, reinvests dividends, and never sells his shares usually holds his own with his more frantic counterpart who seeks deal after deal. Buy-and-hold investors pay far less in commissions, capital gains taxes, and heartburn.

Careers: In 1995, two economists came out with a book called *The Winner-Take-All Society,* which claimed that a few frenetic "winners" were claiming most of society's rewards, while the rest of us just struggle along. Among other problems, these writers limited their definition of "rewards" to financial bounty. But just as character actors frequently have the most interesting roles in films, so too do "losers" who eschew fame and money, avoid cameras, and spend more time with their families and friends lead happier lives.

The most fortunate workers are those who do what they like and remain productive for a long time. Our associate editor Martin Morse Wooster (a Southerner who prefers to think of himself as deliberate, rather than slow) cites his grandmother Katherine Wright as an example of this. She decided at age 65 to be a psychiatrist, and worked six days a week until she was 86; then four days a week until she was 90.



Permission—United Feature Syndicate

People like these, whose careers are slow, long, and happy, are at least as noteworthy as those who lead frantic, highly visible lives.

Entertainment: Here, too, slower is often better. The lengthy novel provides more permanent pleasures than the short story. Old restaurants provide pleasure to their neighborhoods for generations, while more trendy counterparts come and go. And one of the reasons baseball is the best of all spectator sports is that much of the time, nothing happens. It's then that the fan can sit back, drink his beer or eat his hot dog, and quietly contemplate the day.

Life's goals needn't be achieved overnight; most can be met through persistent effort over years or decades. Meanwhile, we can make room for the introspection, lengthy conversations, and regular acts of creation, worship, and celebration that connect us to something deeper and older than ourselves.

The tortoise not only outlives the hare, but has more fun.

OLD IDEAS AND NEW THINGS

Ever notice that some people will buy old, drafty houses and fill them with antiques that are expensive, impractical, uncomfortable, and on the verge of collapse? The same people often serve on the Board of Trustees of historical societies and museums. They will protest the razing of old buildings. Yet let them catch you practicing the faith of your fathers, and they're likely to laugh with scorn that anyone would do something so out of date.

As a Jew, I admit that I do many things my ancestors did, and I've even established a group called Toward Tradition. But I don't carry on ancient religious practices because they're traditional. Just like my father, I take antibiotics when I'm sick. But I take them for a reason, the *same* reason he did. And just as those pills have worked for both of us, so too have morning prayer, keeping kosher, and marrying.

Not that I have anything against the normal human treasuring of the past. But we must distinguish between things and ideas. All sorts of *things* built today are superior to those made yesteryear. Many people can afford homes whose conveniences would astonish monarchs of a previous century. Televisions, computers, and cars continue to get better and more affordable.

The same, alas, cannot be said for ideas. They seem to deteriorate, becoming shoddier and ever more expensive.

I often find myself defending conservatism as a doctrine that sees the virtues of *ancient* ideas and *new* things. My opponents invariably prefer new ideas and old things. Ironically, preserving ancient ideas may just help us avoid an excessive attachment to out-of-date things.

*—Rabbi **Daniel Lapin** is president of Toward Tradition in Mercer Island, Washington.*

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By Karl Zinsmeister

Indicators

MISMEASURING THE COST OF LIVING

Economists have known for a long time that the **government's Consumer Price Index overstates yearly increases in the U.S. cost of living.** Is this a big deal? Yes it is. The index is used as a basic inflation yardstick by employers and unions negotiating contracts, by banks and financial institutions setting interest rates, by the government to make large annual increases in entitlement payments, and by statisticians who rely on the CPI to calculate basic social indicators, like our official family income figures, that tell us how we ought to feel about our national condition.

Recognizing the seriousness of any errors in the CPI, the Senate Finance Committee appointed an advisory commission last year to look into the problem. The commission was chaired by Stanford economist and AEI fellow Michael Boskin, and included the foremost academic experts on the subject of cost-of-living changes. The group issued a final report in December. (See ECONOMIST, page 78.)

Their conclusion: **The CPI currently overestimates annual price increases by between 0.8 and 1.6 percentage points a year,** and it will continue to do so indefinitely into the future. Given that the CPI has indicated total inflation rates of around 3 percent a year over most of the last decade, this indicates that **our estimates of the nation's annual inflation rate have recently been exaggerated by a third or more.**

That is important in two ways: It warps our understanding of the nation's recent development and history. And it will distort our economy in the future.

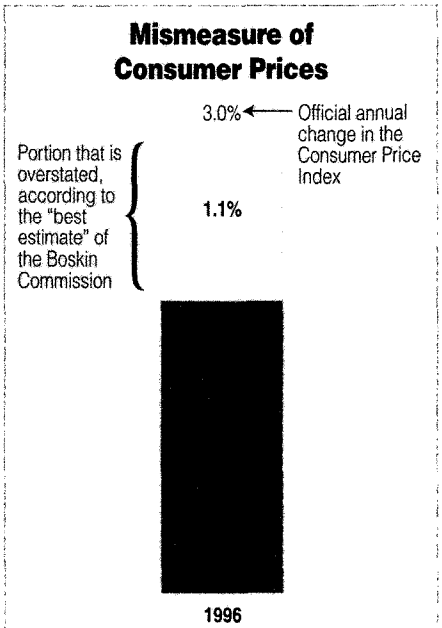
First, history. We have been hearing a great hullaballoo since the 1980s about how the nation has stopped making economic progress—about how worker and family incomes have been "stagnant" for more than two decades. The numbers underlying those claims are all built on CPI measures of annual inflation, and many of us have been warning that such data are flatly contradicted by other ample evidence showing that Americans as a whole have never enjoyed greater economic abundance than today. The Boskin Commission CPI figures confirm this.

Using the commission's "best estimate" of the upward bias in the CPI, after-inflation earnings of the average worker didn't fall 13 percent over two decades as Robert Reich and company claimed. They actually *rose* by 13 percent. **Family income wasn't flat. It *increased* 36 percent in real terms from 1973 to 1996.** National productivity may actually be double or triple what's been reported.

The implications of this reality-check are very large. Polemicists, including our President, challenger Bob Dole, and many others have been arguing for major national economic alterations on the basis of *a false understanding of where the nation stands and where it has been.* Score one in this case for Americans who resisted the "change" that incautious national officials were trying to peddle on the basis of false information.

Big Implication #2 from the Boskin Commission report concerns not our past but our future, specifically the future of government spending. **If today's upward biases in the CPI are not fixed,** the commissioners report, spending on inflation-indexed government programs will increase so much faster than actual inflation that **the net result will be an extra $1.07 trillion in national debt over the next ten years** above what an accurate CPI would yield.

The commissioners urge Congress and the President to fix the CPI and the way government programs and taxes are indexed, because "even small differences compound over time and matter a lot."



Source: CPI-U. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; "Toward a More Accurate Measure of the Cost of Living," Advisory Commission to Study the Consumer Price Index, 1996.

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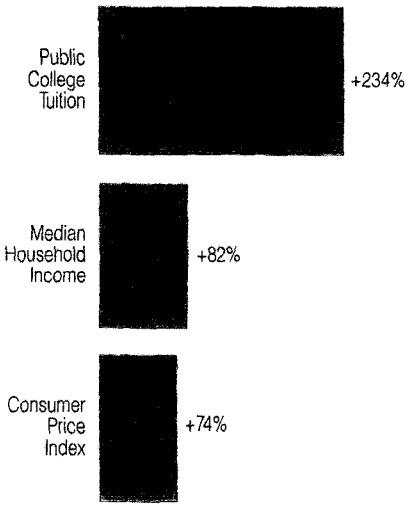
LOGS ON THE COLLEGE TUITION FIRE

President Clinton has proposed new college tuition tax subsidies costing around $10 billion a year. These would **create a middle-class entitlement** to federally subsidized college education for families with incomes as high as $100,000. Many observers warn that one of the likeliest effects of this will be a perverse one, carrying no benefit for families: **Colleges will just push up their tuition rates that much faster.**

There is good reason to worry on this front. A recent report from the U.S. General Accounting Office shows that **from 1980 to 1995, tuition at 4-year public colleges increased 234 percent**—more than three times as fast as the CPI (which itself exceeds actual inflation, as we've just seen), and nearly triple the rise in median household income (a good measure of the ability of families to pay for tuition). The biggest factor driving these soaring fees, states the GAO, is rising faculty salaries.

Over the last two decades, colleges have shown no stomach for keeping costs under control. To the extent that **a new federal entitlement dissipates consumer pressure on campus administrators to curb tuition hikes,** economists warn, we are likely to see the hikes grow even bigger.

Rocketing Tuition
1980–1995 Changes



Source: U.S. General Accounting Office, "Tuition Increasing Faster Than Household Income and Public Colleges' Costs," 1996.

DON'T CUT THAT—LOBBYISTS WILL STARVE IN THE STREETS!

Ken Weinstein of the Government Reform Project at the Heritage Foundation recently published some eye-popping numbers on the nature of testimony now being heard at congressional hearings.

By reviewing the backgrounds of 3,400 witnesses who testified before 15 House and Senate committees in 1995, Weinstein and research assistant August Stofferahn find that **a large majority of all witnesses called to testify before Congress these days are direct recipients of funding from federal taxpayers.**

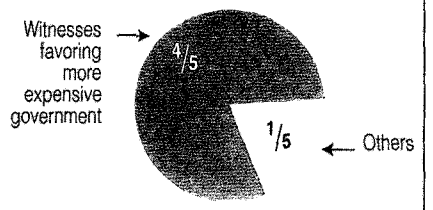
More than a third of all witnesses are federal employees. Nearly another quarter are from an organization that depends directly on federal grants. Of the remaining witnesses, "their exact financial relationship to the federal government is uncertain. Some are federal contractors, while many represent trade associations, businesses, or interest groups with significant economic interests in the outcome of pending congressional legislation.... Even among this 43 percent, at least half testified in favor of more government spending or increased government power."

Overall, **witnesses favoring more expensive government outnumbered their opponents by a ratio of 4:1** in 1995 (and this in a Republican Congress!). Because of this "avalanche of self-serving testimony" from riders on the federal gravy train, the authors warn, "Congressmen find themselves almost cocooned in a pro-spending environment."

Unfortunately, "almost none of these witnesses disclosed the amount and source of their government funding." The authors recommend that "simple disclosure would be the first step toward a more balanced congressional hearing process. **Committee members appear to be unaware of the high percentage of government-subsidized witnesses appearing before them....** Because it is so rarely recognized, the potentially self-serving nature of grant-recipients' testimony is almost never addressed."

A "Truth in Testimony" disclosure rule proposed by Rep. John Doolittle (R-Calif.) will be considered as a House rules change in the new Congress.

Congressional Witnesses
1995



Source: "Congressional Hearings and the Culture of Spending," The Heritage Foundation, December 1996.

ILL-EDUCATED AMERICANS

In the feature article and sidebars on pages 42–45 of this magazine, we discuss the decline of high standards and excellence in the U.S. education system over the last two or three generations. Comparing public surveys of civics knowledge over the last 50 years, *Washington Post* reporter Richard Morin confirms that **average citizens are now much more ignorant than they were in the past.**

Today, only 26 percent of Americans know how many years are in a U.S. Senate term (six). Just 54 percent know who finally decides if a given law is constitutional (the Supreme Court). A mere 24 percent can correctly name both of the U.S. Senators from their state.

Same as it ever was, you may say. But that's not true. Morin compares the current survey with similar Gallup polls conducted in 1947 and 1952. He shows that ignorance has grown at all education levels:

Americans who knew the name of the U.S. Vice President

	1995	1952
School dropout	33%	57%
High school graduate	56	80
Some college	69	89
College graduate	82	94

Americans who knew which party controlled the House of Representatives

	1995	1947
School dropout	48%	59%
High school graduate	54	77
Some college	63	87
College graduate	80	90

Sources: *Washington Post*/Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard University survey of December 1995; Gallup polls.

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"Live" with TAE

WYNTON MARSALIS AND STANLEY CROUCH ARE TWO OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL, FORWARD-LOOKING MEN IN JAZZ—LARGELY BECAUSE THEY LOOK BACKWARD, TOO.

Wynton Marsalis & Stanley Crouch

The Marsalis family doesn't have a jazz tradition; it has a jazz dynasty. Patriarch Ellis Marsalis is still going strong, more than a decade after one critic declared him "New Orleans' premier jazz pianist." His wife, Dolores, sang with jazz bands before her children were born. Number-one son Branford is a prominent saxophonist and band leader, while the second of their six sons, Wynton, is the only musician to win (or even be nominated for) simultaneous Grammy awards for jazz and classical recordings. Younger brothers Delfeayo and Jason are also active in jazz.

Since 1987, Wynton Marsalis has collaborated with author Stanley Crouch on projects that led to the creation of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the first program at a major American arts center to put jazz on par with European art forms like the ballet. Long an influential jazz critic, in recent years Crouch has also become known for his incisive commentary on politics, film, and race relations—all written in prose that leaps and glides and twists like a Sonny Rollins sax solo. Novelist Ralph Ellison has praised him for questioning "the views of both liberals and conservatives." The "key to Stanley Crouch," explains The New Republic*'s Leon Wieseltier, "is the music. Jazz gave him a standard of excellence by which he measures black culture and black politics."*

TAE editor Scott Walter interviewed the two men in Marsalis's apartment in Lincoln Center.

My father was always much hipper than whatever was hip.

—Wynton Marsalis

TAE: Tradition literally means handing on something. How has jazz been handed on in the Marsalis family?

MR. MARSALIS: The thing that had the most impact was just being around all of the jazz musicians, having an opportunity to see how they interacted with each other. It wasn't necessarily what they played.

My father was always much hipper than whatever was hip. Things are marketed to you when you're younger to make you buy into the whole generation gap. With my father, you never really could do that.

TAE: What are some of the best lessons your father taught you?

MR. MARSALIS: He taught me so much. I guess the first thing is that you had to practice if you were going to learn how to play. It wasn't that he preached, "Man, you got to practice." You *saw* him practicing.

Another important thing I learned from him is that the value of something is not based on whether it's accepted. Nobody really would go to his gigs, but he felt good about what he was playing. So we would play gigs, myself and my brother, and we couldn't play at all—we were 13, 14—and our gig would have 2,000 people. My daddy would get 30. But we never had the feeling that the fact that we had 2,000 people made us able to play—or that he wasn't playing.

TAE: In jazz, old songs are called standards. Do you think that a certain respect for tradition helps musicians keep up high standards?

MR. MARSALIS: That helps anybody keep up high standards, because it means that you are relating to the entire history of your field, rather than to whatever is current. Track and field records have stood for 35 years. You don't say, well, what did they jump this year? You're competing with the history.

If you're a doctor, if you're somebody working in technology, you have to keep current. What you're learning all the time is the tradition of your craft.

TAE: Perhaps part of respecting tradition is having a certain humility about yourself. Do you think humility is useful for a musician?

MR. MARSALIS: Humility means that your vi-

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

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sion is much broader. Take somebody like Richard Wagner, who wasn't humble, but his insights were so profound—he was humble in the face of Beethoven. Just practicing to develop techniques requires humility. You can't just think, "I'm the greatest." If you really feel that everything is based on you, there's nothing for you to work on.

MR. CROUCH: I was talking to this saxophone player once who was in his practice studio next to the great Sonny Rollins. Sonny Rollins' sound came through the wall, and so he said, "I know what I'll do, I'll stop practicing and I'll listen to Sonny Rollins. He'll play some way-out stuff, and maybe I'll be able to figure out some of that and go off and play it."

But it turns out Sonny Rollins was playing *scales.* He was practicing. He wasn't trying to be Sonny Rollins. Everything that he, Sonny Rollins, didn't like about his playing, that's what he was working on.

MR. MARSALIS: I was practicing 15 minutes ago. I was playing scales. You've got to deal with these fundamentals.

You know, it took me years to learn how to listen to what people were telling me. Older musicians would tell me something, and I wouldn't understand what they were saying. Let's say a guy like trumpeter Sweets Edison [b. 1915] would say, "You need to play more blues." Well, what blues meant to me was very different from what it meant to him. If I had really thought about what he was saying or if I had asked him, "What do you mean by blues?" then I could have got information. Ask good questions—third, fourth, fifth, sixth questions—then you can get it.

MR. CROUCH: There're certain mysteries that you never solve. When you're dealing with extraordinary people, like Louis Armstrong—nobody will ever know what he was playing. They'll be able to transcribe all of his recordings, and it still won't be what he's playing. Because the thing that was played was his conception of the thing itself. That's the one thing you can never ever take: Armstrong conceiving that on the bandstand.

Musicians represent an objective achievement and an unsolvable mystery. When you listen to pianist Thelonious Monk, you will never figure out how he came up with that. There's a logic to it—oh, he got this part from Duke—but what he came up with is so specifically his. See, if you don't remind somebody of the past, you're not in the idiom you claim that you're in. For somebody to say, "I'm a jazz musician but I don't sound like anything from the past," well, if you don't sound like anything from the past, then you're not a jazz musician.

Musicians represent an objective achievement and an unsolvable mystery. If you don't sound like anything from the past, then you're not a jazz musician.

—Stanley Crouch

MR. MARSALIS: Music is tied into memory. Somebody might hit a note, and it might be from a real, real, real long time ago, because that's how music is. There's a stream that music is in. That's the only way I can describe it. Almost all the musicians will talk about it. They don't put it in the terms that I'm putting it in. Some call it a spirit; Beethoven said he'd be in a dream state—it's when the music comes to you. You don't control it. It's not like language, where you can become facile enough to send up smoke screens. In music, you can't do that. It comes to you and it comes out. It might seem abstract what I'm saying, but it's not. It's something that I know to be true. But I can't prove it.

Louis Armstrong, when he talks about music, talks mainly about King Oliver and people he heard playing when he grew up. Now, he doesn't sound like them. He's Louis Armstrong, so he projects his identity. But his sound is tied into sounds that existed a long, long time ago, but also sounds that you haven't heard.

Like [saxophonist] John Coltrane or Beethoven. You listen to Beethoven's late string quartets: stuff in there *still* hasn't been written. But Beethoven was studying Bach, studying Handel. Richard Wagner comes from something Greek, because music is on a streamline. Those who have vision and depth of insight will project all of that. Those who don't, the more they know about the past and the tradition, the higher quality of art they'll be participating in.

MR. CROUCH: Music is like a triangle: the past, the present, and the future exist at the same time. Everything is coterminous. A musician can be playing a piece—let's call it "The Store on 34th Street." The store on 34th Street was there when he was five years old. He can recapture the emotion of being five years old again at the store. He can recapture the emotion of being 13, looking in the window with his girlfriend. If he's 50 years old, he can remember coming in there with his own kids and them driving him crazy on the third floor. Or he can remember being in there at closing time when that hysteria breaks out. So he could play one song, two or three choruses, and in that abstract code of music, he can be emotionally specific. That's what Proust was talking about when he said the past reclaims. Art allows you actually to reclaim the past and make it vital in the present.

The grand illusion in our period is that you can avoid the weight of the past, which is also the achievement of the past and the tragedy of the past.

MR. MARSALIS: A lot of time you don't know what people are talking about when they say "the

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past." If you're teaching high school, the past is the '70s—back with Earth, Wind & Fire. When you listen to somebody like Coltrane play, what's remarkable to me was that he could raise a whole sound from the dead and speak it in a language that was contemporary.

When I was 12 years old, I was into what was on the radio: the hits of 1972. I knew all of them. I loved them. I listened to them. But when I put on Coltrane, I thought, "Damn, this sounds like something from another world." I didn't even know when it was recorded. I didn't know it was old, necessarily—recorded in 1959. That's before I was born. Is that old? Well, it's not as old as the Louisiana Purchase.

Some of the greatest musicians can evoke feelings in music that they never heard. Like what Crouch was talking about: what if somebody can play not only what you experienced in the store, but play what the storekeeper experienced? Music has that kind of grab. A teacher can sit down with you in a music lesson, and he can make you feel how he felt about music. You can listen to somebody like Sweets Edison: when I hear the sound that comes out of his horn, I can hear what he felt about something. But it's in the language of music so it can't be translated.

MR. CROUCH: There was one night at Lincoln Center that was really amazing. When Doc Cheatham was a little boy, people were still dancing to ragtime tunes. So when you hear him play, it's like we are able to walk through that screen and be 50 years away.

My favorite passage of the *Iliad* is where Hector and these guys are standing on the parapet and they're looking out, and they say, "Oh, that's Odysseus there and that's Ajax; that's Menelaus; Achilles is over here." So Priam, Hector's father, walks up and says, "They're nothing but a bunch of punks. When I was a boy, we used to throw boulders at each other." And then he walks off.

Now, there's no male on the face of this Earth who lives in any community that has fathers and grandfathers and uncles who has not had that exact experience. Whatever it is he's talking about, some older guy is going to walk up to him and his boys and tell them, "Look, boys, you think you're hardy—we used to put salt on tacks and eat them."

Take a guy like Duke Ellington or Thelonious Monk: at different times you can hear them playing not only the autobiography of who they are, but the autobiography of the world they knew.

MR. MARSALIS: Duke Ellington would have some melodies that would be like something that was played in a Western dance hall in 1846. That conception of many voices going on at the same time: I know that there was music in some civilization a long, long time ago that had that same feeling in it.

> People in the arts, particularly jazz, are really not impressed with adolescents. They understand what my father meant when he said, "Boy, I been your age. You ain't been mine."
>
> —Stanley Crouch

And then what about tone? Tone is the most mysterious factor in music. And when you deal with jazz, you're talking about people who are producing tones as well as playing. The tone of Louis Armstrong: where does that come from? Tone has information in it. I could go to an elementary school and listen to 25 kids play, and none of them can play. But each one will have a distinct imprint in their tone. Some of them have a humorous tone. Some have a lot of wisdom in their tones. It's a spiritual thing.

TAE: How do religion and the spiritual tie into jazz more generally?

MR. MARSALIS: Almost every great musician talks about love and spirituality. Duke Ellington, Beethoven, Bach, Jackie McLean. When I did a radio show for National Public Radio, it shocked me how many musicians, when I said let's boil it all down, said jazz music came from a spiritual perspective—not necessarily the religious but spiritual. If you don't have a spiritual consciousness, it's hard for you to be on a certain level.

MR. CROUCH: Music is the art of the invisible, so it exists on the same level as emotion and thought, which we don't see either. How do you actually feel right now? We don't see that. But if you had a horn, and you were playing, then it would all come clear. Whatever it is, it would all come clear. And that's the real power of music.

TAE: What happens to musicians who reject tradition or want to run away from it, terrified of ever sounding like anyone else?

MR. MARSALIS: I don't think that many do that.

MR. CROUCH: I've never heard anybody sound like that. I've heard people *say* that. I remember in the '70s when I was around a lot of guys who were involved in the Lower East Side, and I would go hear them on their jobs, and they would be squeaking. But when I went by their house, they would have Charlie Parker on or Duke Ellington. They would never be listening to anything like what they play. I'd say, "Oh, now they want to enjoy some music."

TAE: A lot of people think America is anti-traditional today. Is that fair?

MR. MARSALIS: Americans are a very traditional people. Most people out there are doing what they've been doing for a long time. If you go and stay with your grandfather, you're going

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into that world. I can remember being in my great-aunt's house and they had a little picture of Jesus and plastic on the furniture—

MR. CROUCH: Candy stuck together in a bowl.

MR. MARSALIS: —but I didn't go into their house and say, Well, this is how old people live, because I was in their house from the time I was a baby. It's just like tradition: If you're a musician and you hear something you like, you want to do something that's going to sound like that. Bartok's fugue doesn't sound like Bach's fugue—but it does. Beethoven's doesn't sound like Bach's—but it does. It's not like a musician sat down and said, "I have to return to the past."

MR. CROUCH: Take one of these people who claims that he hates the past and wants to deal with the new to the hospital. You have one doctor that looks like he's about 45, and some young nervous guy that goes to pick up scalpels and shakes. And the older guy says, "No, those are the wrong ones, boy."

Now, this person who hates the old and loves the new, which one of those two do you think he's going to let go to work on him?

People try to make themselves superior to their own moment. It's like girls in junior high school who get together and nothing is good enough for them. I was talking to some people, and they were saying, "So-and-so is 'innovative.'" I said, "What exactly do you mean when you say innovative? You're not talking about something that's just different?" The Wright brothers—that's a real innovation. If an innovation means that you turn your pants around backwards so the zipper's going down the back, and then you tear a hole in the front to take a leak, it's not a real innovation because it hasn't advanced the proposition of pants.

TAE: Who were some of the people that you grew up respecting in jazz or the rest of life?

MR. MARSALIS: I respected a lot of people. One guy was named Buddy Lawson. He was a janitor. He petitioned the city to make it possible for us to play football and baseball and basketball. Before that, black kids didn't have teams. He's just an old guy, Mr. Buddy. He talked like this: "Damn, son, I told you to get your ass into practice and not stand around." And we just loved it, you know? I just went back home, and they changed the name of the field to Buddy Lawson.

MR. CROUCH: One of the things that characterizes people in the arts, particularly jazz, is they're really not impressed with the adolescents. If they have the choice of hanging around with people that are 15 or 16 and actually hanging with some men, they're going to be with some men. My father told me one day, "Boy, I been your age. You ain't been mine."

> When musicians have to learn how to play in more than one style, they get a lesson in humility and an appreciation for the greatness of an art form. They discover it can be the same thing in more than one way.
>
> —Wynton Marsalis

These old guys, they have a body of stuff that they know about. A kid was telling me he was sitting in the trumpet section next to Cootie Williams, from Duke Ellington's band. And the kid admitted, "Man, I really blew that one. I was so tied up with thinking that I just wanted to play some bop, and I was irritated because I was sitting up there playing this Duke Ellington music that wasn't be-bop music. Cootie Williams was trying to explain a lot of things to me about the trumpet, and I wasn't listening to him. If I'd listened to him, started working on what he was trying to tell me, I probably could do a whole bunch of stuff with the trumpet in my style. But I felt that listening to him would cause me to go backwards. That just lets you know how dumb I was. Sitting there with this great man who'd played trumpet longer than I've been alive, and I'm not going to let him tell me something."

MR. MARSALIS: What we're working on at Lincoln Center is intended as an antidote to all of the confusion about generations and traditions. We're trying to break down all the barriers between old and new by just making sure that what musicians play and people hear is *good.*

TAE: You're referring to the program Jazz at Lincoln Center, where you're the artistic director?

MR. CROUCH: Yeah. I remember being in the lobby after one concert years ago when some guy said to the woman with him, "Are you sure this is jazz? It sounds good." He was probably one of those people who were accustomed to bad sound crews and under-rehearsed music. In keeping with the master and apprentice angle, young musicians work with grandmasters as often as we can make that happen, so that the aspiring kid gets information from the source.

MR. MARSALIS: When musicians have to learn how to play in more than one style, they get a lesson in humility and an appreciation for the greatness of an art form. They discover it can be the same thing in more than one way. Jazz is broad and deep. It has all kinds of lessons to offer, and we're trying to master as many of those lessons as we can so that we can pass them on to the musicians and the public.

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TRADITION AND THE SEXES

COURTSHIP AND *THE RULES*

(OR, WHY YOUNG WOMEN NEED FLOWERS & CANDY)

By Mary Elizabeth Podles

There is a tradition in my house of not reading bestsellers, but I've made an exception for *The Rules: Time-tested Secrets for Capturing the Heart of Mr. Right.* Politically incorrect from the title on, this guide to old-fashioned coquetry has raised the hackles of every feminist writer worth her salt. The book's crime: implicitly casting doubt on the sexual revolution, which was supposed to bring the sexes into equilibrium. Making childbirth optional through contraception—and providing abortion on demand for those pesky infants who still insisted upon appearing on the scene—was supposed to abolish the old stereotype of man as hunter and woman as prey. Then with the field of sexual pleasure-without-consequence open to everyone equally, the rules become the same for women as for men. All we have to do is speak our preferences plainly and a whole new world of mutual felicity should arise.

Unfortunately, with the playing field leveled, we find ourselves playing a form of no-holds-barred rugby, when some of us would rather be playing croquet. Now, many women play rugby and enjoy it—but all who play it end up shaken and bruised. Somehow not everyone is happy in the new feminist framework. Marriage, which should have become a 50-50 partnership with every child a wanted child, is not alive and well in America. Dare we say it? The new concept of sexual parity does not work.

Enter the Rules Girls, authors Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider. Right out loud they announce that something is awry. Things are not better than what we had before. It may be that men and women are constitutionally different. Recent neurological studies reveal that men and women use entirely different areas of their brains to solve problems, endure pain, and store the gender of the definite article in German. The relatively new science of evolutionary psychology dares to suggest that the different neurologies have distinct advantages, and anyway are too deeply ingrained by eons of human experience to be altered by the relatively new processes of human reason.

Courtship behavior, for instance, seems to be very deep-seated. Psychologists interviewing subjects about what attracted them to their mates were startled at how quickly food entered into the conversation. Gradually it dawned on those who had studied animal psychology that courtship feeding was often crucial to mating, that there were lizards, for example, who were never permitted to copulate without first presenting their intended with a nice juicy bug.

Or consider the bowerbird of New Guinea. The male spends hours constructing an elaborate edifice of no apparent practical purpose. Some build "dancing platforms," thick mats of leaves arranged silvery side up and studded with flowers and fruits; some create "maypoles," towers of berry-studded twigs twined around saplings with garlands of fruits and flowers swung between them.

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Some plant surrounding lawns of tree moss. Some build long "avenues" of decorated interlacing sticks between trees. Others build huts the size of children's playhouses and paint the insides with a mixture of fruit juices, charcoal, and saliva, daubed on with a "paintbrush" made of leaves (a rare instance of an animal using a tool). These puzzling structures are not nests; the female builds a small brown nest elsewhere. The bowers are far too conspicuous for the assured safety of young. Instead, they seem solely meant to please the female bowerbird, to persuade her that the builder is a suitable mate. No one asks these charming and energetic birds whether all this is really necessary, and from an evolutionary standpoint, the strategy seems eminently successful: there are 17 species of bowerbird, each with its own distinct architectural style.

So, too, men and women seem to be different, at least when it comes to courtship behavior. Our grandmothers may have known what they were doing after all. And so, having empirically discovered the bowerbird lurking in every male heart, the Rules Girls decided to reinvent the art of playing hard to get:

> Men love a challenge—that's why they play sports, fight wars, and raid corporations. The worst thing you can do is make it easy for them.... Men really feel good when they work hard to see you. Don't take that away from them.

So far so good. The Rules Girls, the evolutionary psychologists, and I are in accord in opposing conventional feminist assumptions. But alas, the enemy of my enemies is not always my friend. I have serious reservations about *The Rules*. Partly I dislike its smartypants tone. Mostly, though, I object to the fact that the authors show you how to behave as if you were reticent, modest, and chaste—without insisting you actually *adopt* those virtues.

Some earlier writers have propounded essentially the same behavioral advice, but with a deeper understanding of the real nature of human courtship. May I recommend the excellent works of Dr. Jane Austen? Many are currently available on video. Miss Austen's characters not only act according to the *Rules* but also have strong character too. How does Elizabeth Bennet first attract the attention of Mr. Darcy? She refuses to dance with him. Why does he notice the fineness of her eyes? She turns them away from him. Where does her sister Lydia, who is sex on wheels and not, shall we say, reticent about it, end up? In a disastrous marriage, based on convenience and short-term gratification, the kind that nowadays ends in divorce.

Miss Austen also raises the question many intelligent women find themselves asking: Is all this coyness really necessary? It smacks of insincerity and manipulation even in the best of circumstances. Surely we reasonable creatures could dispense with these convolutions? Even the redoubtable Miss Manners—a clear descendant of Austen—has to wrestle with this one a little when prescribing a dose of *Rules* behavior to a young woman whose suitor's ardor seems to be cooling:

> Miss Manners apologizes if this [recommendation] sounds like the old keep-'em-guessing routine. She is well aware how exhausting, degrading, and debilitating such antics are for the sure and loving heart. That is why God invented marriage: to give people a rest.

Miss Manners has put her dainty finger on the heart of the truth, a truth which even the Rules Girls, for all their smartness, have not quite reached. The difficult path of courtship is not just a biological quirk; it is a serious promise spoken without words. Love always asks for deeds, not words. In serious courtship, a man conveys to a woman that if she is worth all this trouble to court, she must be worth more than any other mate in the world, and shall henceforth be The One Woman. On her part, the woman promises that if she was this hard for him to get, surely she will, as his wife, be impossible for others to get. The courtship dance is the unspoken pledge of future fidelity—the best of all bases for a happy marriage. The uncertainties of the romantic beginning whisper a promise of stable partnership.

The best section of *The Rules* deals with what to do with a man once you get him. Their rules here are good ones to follow even if you are planning to be a nun, for they are the rules of the universe: "Don't lie," "try to be serene and unselfish, or you won't be a happy princess," "try not to raise your voice or scream too much," and so on. These are the rules for all who would lead a happy life. That, submit Ms. Fein and Ms. Schneider, is why they wrote the book in the first place.

And that, dear readers, is also why I have written this article on the importance of the tradition of courtship—not for you, but for my daughters, Mary and Sarah. Whether I hand on to you motherly advice, tough house rules, or just my dog-eared copy of *Sense and Sensibility*, it is simply because I want for you nothing more nor less than a happy life.

Mary Elizabeth Podles, former curator of Renaissance Art at the Walters Gallery, has degrees from Wellesley and Columbia and currently lives with her Mr. Right and their six children in Baltimore.

THE VITAL TRADITION OF MANHOOD

By Leon J. Podles

It is a straightforward fact that half of the human population is born male. Being a male and becoming a man, however, are two different things. To become a man, a boy has to undergo a process that is often stormy and perilous.

The primary caretakers of young children are almost always the mothers (in all cultures). A little girl can therefore model herself comfortably, right from the start, on her sexual elder. A boy, however, must at some point pull away from the security of his mother to seek out his male identity. He must confront challenges and dangers, and then learn to nurture in a masculine way by shedding sweat and blood to protect and provide for his mate and children.

Becoming a man requires the young boy to die to his old, mother-sheltered self and be born as a new person. He is forced

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to leave a warm place to find his natural role. Without a guide on this difficult path a man can easily lose his bearings, fall into the abyss, and even become an evil which threatens the community, rather than a front-line defender of the community.

Most boys learn what it is to be a man from their father. The most valuable thing a father can give his son—far more valuable than an inheritance, or a career, or a network of business associates—is a clear sense of the requirements of manhood. A father knows that becoming a good man requires transcending one's self, and he knows how difficult that is, and that even he has only partially succeeded. He knows that good men must be taught and trained up that way, and that the body of male tradition and ritual is a very important tool for achieving this.

Fatherhood itself is a tradition—unlike motherhood, which is a fact of nature. A man must be educated into connecting himself to his children, and fathering them. He must have the traditions of previous fathers passed down to him. Staying through long years with the woman he has impregnated and the resulting child is a challenge to a man, who is urged by biology to seek younger women and work only to support himself.

FATHERHOOD ITSELF IS A TRADITION—UNLIKE MOTHERHOOD, WHICH IS A FACT OF NATURE. A MAN MUST BE EDUCATED INTO CONNECTING HIMSELF TO HIS CHILDREN

Parents need institutional help in initiating boys into manhood. Premodern societies often have puberty rituals, and they are almost always for males. Boys are forcefully taken from their mothers and put through an ordeal which may even result in death, and which always breaks down their personality. They are whipped, tattooed, scarred, circumcised, buried alive. When the old boyish personality is dead, the adult men of the society instruct the boys in the sacred traditions of their society, the myths of origin, the meaning of sex, the necessity of being always ready to face challenges and to expend oneself for the life of others.

Societies that do not have puberty rituals make it even harder for boys, because the boys never know definitely when they have become men. The cultures of the ancient Mediterranean and of the Germans did not have rites; instead they had epics. Every Greek boy traditionally learned the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* so that he could know what it was to be a man in his society.

The Jews, too, wanted their boys to grow up to be men, sons of the covenant. The books of the Old Testament were written, in large part, to show men what it was to be a man. The writers showed the dangers and pitfalls along the path to true manhood, the traps into which even Adam and Abraham and Moses had fallen. The writers showed Israel being guided by a Providence that was slowly forming the perfect man, a man who would learn to be a man by studying the traditions of his people, the books that his ancestors had written.

Institutions dedicated to making men out of boys are always full of tradition in its most concrete form—ritual. The armies and athletic teams and fraternal orders of the world have uniforms, flags, toasts, songs, music handed down from one generation to the next, all as reminders that others have gone this way before and succeeded. It is no accident that members of the male-dominated armed services have below-average crime rates, while underclass boys, living in matriarchal families and experiencing the least male dominance, have the highest crime rates.

Boys who are growing into men need guidance. If a boy tries to become a man on his own, he will probably fail, and in any society where a significant number of men never grow up, there will be suffering. For unmanly men tend to two extremes: either soft and selfish, unwilling to support or defend others, or harsh and violent, accustomed to brutally taking whatever they want.

Alas, the traditions that build manhood are being lost in our society. Many grown males neglect them, and feminists assault them directly. There are attacks on masculine tradition in the American military, in education, and in family life. Men have already vanished from black families and are rapidly vanishing from white families. The churches, even those nominally run by male clergy, have long since been turned over to women. Most now provide little guidance on how to become a man. A lad of mushy personality will now be told to join the Marines to become a man, not pushed toward the seminary.

Wherever they do remain, masculine traditions are derided as irrational. Of course they *are* irrational. But manhood is not rational. It is not rational to die to protect others. Manhood is a cultural invention that is practical (indeed, vital) for society. But it is not built on individual reason.

Without the guidance of men and the traditions of manhood, boys pick up what clues they can from the media, or gangs of one type or another, and they often make a botch of their growing up. Violence is the only consistent message they see. But while willingness to risk violence against evil is part of manhood, without the full tradition of manhood and the moral guidance it contains, male aggression can convert boys into monsters that prey on society, the Grendels lurking in the dark, the predators who shoot women and children.

It is very, very easy for a boy unguided by the inheritance of the traditional male script to go wrong. Critics who attack "patriarchy" and the teaching rituals of masculinity are wrong if they think the result will be a gentler, more androgynous society. It will be gangsta rappers and—beyond them, when the chaos becomes intolerable—the dark shadows of nihilism and the black uniforms of the S.S.

Leon J. Podles, father of six, has his doctorate in English from the University of Virginia. He is an assistant scoutmaster and is completing a book, The Castration of Christianity: Why Men Think Religion is Effeminate.

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MANNERS MATTER

BY JUDITH MARTIN

Society's condemnation of etiquette for being artificial and repressive stems from an idealistic if hopelessly naive belief in what we might call Original Innocence—the idea that people are born naturally good but corrupted by civilization. This is a very sweet idea, but it bears no relation to human nature.

Yes, we're born adorable, or our parents would strangle us in our cribs. But we are not born good; that has to be learned. And if it is not learned, when we grow up and are not quite so cuddly, even our parents can't stand us....

Administering etiquette, like administering law, is more than just knowing a set of rules. Even the most apparently trivial etiquette rules are dictated by principles of manners which are related to, and sometimes overlap with, moral principles. Respect and dignity, for example, are two big principles of manners from which a lot of etiquette rules are derived. This does not mean that you can simply deduce your rules of behavior from first principles. There are things you just have to know, like whether a man is supposed to show respect by taking his hat *off*, as in church, or putting a hat on, as in a synagogue.

Moral people who understand these principles still figure that civility is not a top-priority virtue. First, they're going to fix the world, and then on the seventh day they're going to introduce civility. Deep in their hearts, they think etiquette is best applied to activities that don't really matter much, like eating or getting married.

But the absence of manners is a cause of some of our most serious social problems. For instance, our school systems have broken down from what is called a lack of discipline. What does that mean? It means that such etiquette rules as sitting still, listening to others, taking turns, and not hitting others have not been taught.

A great deal of crime begins with the short tempers people develop from being treated rudely all the time, and from perceived forms of disrespect. Getting "dissed," as it's called in the streets, is one of today's leading motivations for murder.

Nor will the business of government be done well, or sometimes done at all, by people who can't work together in civil, statesman-like ways. That is why we have all those highly artificial forms of speech for use in legislatures and courtrooms. Even in a courtroom where freedom of speech is being defended, there is no freedom to speak rudely. In legislatures we have phrases like "my distinguished colleague seems to be sadly mistaken"—because if we spoke freely and frankly, people would be punching each other out instead of airing arguments.

We have a legal system that bars us from acting on natural human impulses to pillage, assault, and so forth. Whether we appreciate it or not, we also have an extra-legal system, called etiquette, that does many of the same things.

Law is supposed to address itself to the serious and dangerous impulses that endanger life, limb, and property. Etiquette addresses provocations that are minor but can grow serious if unchecked. Etiquette has some very handy conflict resolution systems—such as the apology, sending flowers in the morning, saying "I don't know what I was thinking"—that help settle things before they have to go through the legal system.

But as we've seen in the past few decades, when people refuse to comply with etiquette the law has to step in. A classic example is smoking. We've had to use the law to explain such simple etiquette rules as: You don't blow smoke in other people's faces, and you don't blow insults in other people's faces pretending it's health advice. Sexual harassment is another example that had to be turned over to the law because those in a position of power refused to obey such basic values as "Keep your hands to yourself."

It's a dangerous idea to keep asking the law to do etiquette's job. Not that I wouldn't love to have a squad of tough cops who would go around and roust people who don't answer invitations and write thank-you notes. But when we have to enlarge the scope of law to enforce manners, it really does threaten freedom.

Even I think people should have a legal right to be obnoxious. I don't think they should exercise it. And I do think they should be prepared to take the consequences: If you stomp on the flag, some people will not want to listen to your opinions. If you disrupt and spoil activities for other people who want to participate, they're going to throw you out. Those are the mild little sanctions of etiquette, but they work.

Trying to live by law alone does not work. Every little nasty remark is labeled a slander and taken to court; meanness gets dressed up as "mental cruelty"; and everything else that's annoying is declared a public health hazard. That's why we need the little extra-legal system over which I have the honor of presiding.

Judith Martin writes the internationally syndicated "Miss Manners" newspaper column, and has just published a new book entitled Miss Manners' Basic Training: Communications. *The above is adapted from a speech she recently delivered to the National Women's Democratic Club.*

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WHY THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY Will Never Become Obsolete

BY KARL ZINSMEISTER

In 1978, anthropologist Mary Leakey made a breathtaking discovery in a fossil lava bed in east Africa: the first human footprints, 3.6 million years old. They clearly indicate two creatures walking upright, between four and five feet tall, one larger than the other, apparently a male and a female. They were walking next to each other, perhaps, Leakey thinks, holding hands. There is also a third set of prints, much smaller, belonging to a child. These are carefully placed within the larger prints—as a youngster playfully following his parents through soft ground would do. The significance of Leakey's find, summarizes author William Tucker, is to remind us that "The nuclear family was not invented in Europe in the eighteenth century nor in Europe of the eighth century, nor even Ancient Egypt of the eighteenth century B.C. When the first diminutive human-like creatures walked on the planet three and a half million years ago, they had already formed the nuclear family."

Over the last 20 years, the irreplaceable benefits of the traditional family, particularly when it comes to raising healthy children, have been clearly documented by research. Where the traditional family is in trouble, we now know, there will be crime, drug abuse, poor educational outcomes, suicide, promiscuity, and society as a whole will be in trouble. This is no longer scientifically controversial.

We've touched on some of that sociological evidence in previous editions of this magazine; those arguments won't be repeated here. Instead, I want to present in the pages following a *different* kind of defense of the traditional family—a reading from human history and biology. For there is much evidence from these areas as well that the traditional family is a natural and irreplaceable component of human society, and something that will, perforce, be with us so long as civilization flourishes.

There are *reasons* why the traditional mother-father-child family has existed since the beginning of human time.

ORIGINS OF THE FAMILY

We *Homo Sapiens* have a serious biological problem—called childhood.

As Harvard scientist Stephen Jay Gould points out, "human babies are born as embryos, and embryos they remain for about the first nine months of life." If humans were born at the stage of development more typical of other mammals, a baby would remain *in utero* for up to a year longer than the nine months it already does. The reason we are born "premature" instead is elemental: very few female pelvises could expel a neonate the size of a one-year old infant. Human labor is already quite difficult compared to other animals, and newborns are only 40 percent the size of the average one-year old. More importantly (since skull diameter is the limiting factor in vaginal birth) the brain of a 9-month-gestation newborn is only about one-quarter its final size.

Premature birth solves a human physiological dilemma, but it creates a cultural one. While monkey infants can navigate independently and find and cling to their mother when they need her, while newborn horses can run from danger just a few hours from birth, and while other animals can hunt, dig, swim or fly within days of their arrival into the world, human young remain utterly helpless for an extended period, unable even to control their own temperature, see clearly, grasp, or roll over. Even the healthiest of babies thus requires intensive care and supervision.

And the incapability of humans extends far beyond infancy. It is a long time before we are finally able to survive on our own. While most mammals are autonomous and essentially full-grown within a single season, it takes our brains about fifteen annual cycles to reach their final capacity, and our bodies even a little longer. We are far slower to develop to independent maturity than any other living creature.

This problem is made even knottier by the fact that human culture is so complex that no individual can begin to be a competent citizen until he or she has undergone years and years worth of intensive acculturation. We must absorb millions of bits of information from our

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progenitors—on everything from safe foods to language to the simultaneous uses and dangers of fire—before we can safely navigate our world.

The combined result of our premature launch and our heavy dependence upon cultural transmission is *an extraordinarily long and demanding childhood.* Absent a critical cultural adaptation, human beings could never have thrived in the face of this constraint. But they did fashion an adaptation, and a brilliant one: the family. The traditional family was a way of capturing the energy of the male parent as well as the female, and channelling it into the rearing of the young.

In this way, mothers gained an ally to help them through their vulnerable periods of pregnancy and lactation. Frail youngsters won the benefit of not one but two protectors, producers, and caretakers. And under this joint nurturing structure reproductive success soared. Even prior to the advent of the civilized era, one out of every two human babies survived to adulthood, thanks to the aid of their families. This compares to between 10 and 30 percent for other primates and group-hunting carnivores, which lack any counterpart to the nuclear family. And mature humans turned out to be unusually competent creatures, bearers of a rich culture.

By stitching fathers to mothers and mothers to fathers, and weaving both to their children in a mission of mutual aid, the traditional family allowed humans to transcend brutish self-interest and produce higher civilization in its full splendor.

WILD BOYS WITHOUT THE FAMILY

Actually, the family may be responsible for our humanity itself. In records going back hundreds of years we know of a small number of cases of young children lost or abandoned in the wilderness who managed to survive on their own, out of regular contact with other humans. In some cases there is the possibility these children may have been temporarily adopted, even suckled, by a wild animal. When captured, these "wolf" or "feral" children who came of age outside of families have been so animalistic as to be barely recognizable as human.

"Peter of Hanover" and "Victor" the "Wild Boy of Aveyron," for instance, were snapping and convulsive youths who had to learn even to be conscious of pain and changes in temperature when apprehended in 1723 and 1800 respectively. They lived solely to survive, to satisfy crude drives to eat and sleep, and could be interested in little else—not tools or toys, not the bustle of city streets, not money, not sex. Scientists were most surprised by the "unrelieved apathy" and mental indifference of these individuals. "One would think...that he cannot reflect on anything," wrote one scientist observing Victor. "As a result, he has no discernment, no real mind, no memory."

Children who've grown up without nurture apparently lack any sense that they can be something other than what they are. Encountering the world without parental sponsors they come to feel wholly at life's mercy. They have no sense of the future, nor of responsibility. "Because he could not easily conceive of other states of mind outside his own," writes chronicler Roger Shattuck, "Victor could not reach a point of view from which other persons' lives and happiness had reality and importance for him." None of the captured feral children ever learned much language, despite intensive efforts by gifted and devoted teachers in several instances.

Similar symptoms can be observed among persons who have been kept in relative isolation as children (among those who survive, that is—most infants who are not regularly talked to, held, and otherwise interacted with literally shrivel and die). Kaspar Hauser, a German foundling confined in a dark room during childhood, remained awkward and stunted even after extensive compensatory training during adolescence, and experienced the world primarily as a source of either pleasure or pain. "Genie," a California girl who spent most of her time in seclusion from ages two to thirteen has never been able to learn to speak beyond the level of a four-year old, and lives now in a supervised home, badly damaged.

All of these individuals were genetically and physically normal. "By nature" they were typically human. But when deprived of family care, they became scarcely distinguishable from simple beasts. Family-less man, then, appears to be a not-so-inspiring creature. The fundamental competences by which we differentiate ourselves from lower animals are less innately biological than products of our parental upbringings. It is only when humans are socialized and raised up in homes that they display the creative powers we think of as their defining essence.

IS THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY A VICTORIAN ANOMALY?

By keeping in mind that our humanness itself is bound up with family nurture, we can begin to understand what would otherwise be a great puzzle: How is it that across tens of thousands of years when almost nothing else has stayed the same, the institution of the nuclear family has remained mostly unchanged? How is it that among people of today who are so radically divergent in other ways, the traditional family is omnipresent, universal? Can we think of any other aspect of human culture which has varied so comparatively little among (literally) men and women eating berries and

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CULTURES, RELIGIONS, ECONOMIES, AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS EVOLVE IN GAUDY ARRAY, BUT HUMANITY'S JUDGMENT ON THE OPTIMAL DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENT HAS BEEN REMARKABLY CONSISTENT.

wearing animal skins and men and women talking over satellite links?

In corners of our universities and within feminist theory in particular there is a popular notion today that the traditional nuclear family was a kind of strange 1950s blip—an invention of Eisenhower Republicans, or maybe neurotic Victorians—a short-lived oddity whose passing has now returned us to the "diverse" family patterns that are humanity's more normal state. Feminist Lillian Rubin argues the typical case when she says that the nuclear family "was, historically speaking, a reality for a very brief period following the Industrial Revolution and even then *only* among a select group of people—the bourgeoisie."

Proponents of this view take their argument, often without realizing it, directly from Friedrich Engels (co-writer with Karl Marx of *The Communist Manifesto*), who popularized a portrayal of the family as an "oppressive institution" invented in the seventeenth or eighteenth century to serve capitalism. Engels, relying on the erroneous scholarship of Lewis Morgan, insisted that the original pre-industrial family had been characterized by promiscuity and matriarchy, and he looked forward to the abolition of the monogamous family entirely. An interesting theory—except it lacks even the slightest shred of scientific foundation.

By the late 1800s, anthropological studies had concluded that the intact mother-father-child unit—what we might call the "natural family"—is a human universal that varies relatively little across time or place. Cultures, religions, economies, and political systems evolve in gaudy array, but humanity's judgment on the optimal domestic arrangement is remarkably consistent. This is the one place where nearly all human beings share common ground.

Against claims that the nuclear family is an artifact of bourgeois industrialism, there are findings that it is the fundamental unit even in hunting and gathering societies. Among the !Kung people of southern Africa, for instance, parents schedule their foraging activities on alternate days so that one of them can remain with the children. Such families may band together into extended clans for warfare and other specialized purposes, but they will return to mother-father-child groupings whenever food or other supplies are stretched. Thanks to discoveries like these, the traditional family's position at the center of human history has been beyond dispute (except in a few radical bastions) since the turn of the twentieth century.

Over the last three decades, however, an energetic secondary attack on the traditional family has been launched—in essence suggesting that while the nuclear has always predominated it hasn't been especially wholesome. The roots of the debate go back to 1960, when Philippe Ariès published an influential book arguing that until the modern era, most parents were indifferent to children, made no special efforts to either protect or foster them, and treated them basically as adults. Before long, Lloyd deMause, Edward Shorter, and a few other writers put forth even more popular variations of the argument, alleging that in the traditional family of history, parents not only made no special provisions for their children, they actually often mistreated them, sometimes in sadistic ways. As evidence they cite records of child abandonment, high juvenile mortality rates, and upper-class practices like wet-nursing by strangers.

These polemics swept rapidly into the conventional academic wisdom, and partisans latched onto them in two ways. Some argued that Ariès' thesis showed that our twentieth century emphasis on parental nurture is a neurotic fallacy and an unnecessary burden on mothers, that the "invention of childhood" went hand in hand with the domestic enslavement of females. The subtext of the gloomier deMause/Shorter variation is also hostile to the traditional family: If we moderns are leaving previous family structures behind, it implies, so much the better.

HAVE HISTORICAL FAMILIES BEEN GOOD TO CHILDREN?

It's undeniable that in times when almost *every family* lost youngsters to disease, when all but a small fraction of the human population hovered near bare subsistence, when parents had little control of their fertility, attitudes toward children were somewhat different. But it's also clearly the case that most parents have always struggled to give their children what they need. The traditional family of history compares favorably in this regard to many of our more "modern" family varieties, a substantial body of research suggests.

In a book published by Cambridge University Press, for instance, historian Linda Pollock analyzes personal letters and diaries dating back to the year 1500 and finds that parents have been quite consistent over the centuries in taking interest in their children, in expressing anxiety about things like teething and weaning, and in feeling distress over the possibility of a child's illness or death. Though physical punishment was, for cultural reasons, far commoner in earlier centuries, Pollock concludes that most children were never battered, and she cites many instances of tenderness, informality, and easy communication between parents and children in the distant past. "Instead of trying to explain the supposed changes in the parent-child relationship," Pollock suggests pointedly, "historians would do well to ponder just why parental care is a variable so curiously *resistant* to change."

William Gouge pondered this very question way back in 1622. His answer, in his childrearing text *On Domestical Duties*, is that parent-child affinity is an original and permanent aspect of human nature:

> The Fountaine of parents duties is Love....Great reason there is why this affection should be fast fixed in the heart of parents towards their children. For great is that paine, cost, and care, which parents must undergoe for their children. But if love be in them, no paine, paines, cost, or care will seeme too much. Herein appeareth the wise providence of God, who by nature hath so fast fixed love in the hearts of parents, as if there be any in whom it aboundeth not, he is counted unnaturall.

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Gouge was a Puritan—a group often accused of displaying cold rigidity toward children. Actually, their family relations were quite supportive and healthy. The Puritans who set out on the risky pilgrimmages to Holland and America repeatedly justified their ordeals as in the best interests of their offspring. Puritan sympathies for children were strong, and the constraints they place on them were comparatively mild—daughters, for instance, were allowed considerable discretion in choices of suitors. These attitudes grew directly from Puritan theology, which emphasized that children were morally autonomous individuals.

Long before the arrival of Puritanism, Western religion had established itself as a positive force for children. Early Hebrew law prohibited any form of infanticide, and the young were brought along to Jewish synagogues and included in services. The teachings and example of Jesus further established the value of children within Christianity. One reflection of Christian celebration of traditional family nurturance is the emphasis given the Holy Family motif (which had become almost an obsession by the time of the Renaissance).

It ought not surprise us, then, to learn that gravestone inscriptions, church penitentials, and other historical evidence show that lower class parents in the medieval period "felt toward children the same mixture of tenderness, amusement, and wonder that they feel today....children were valued and well treated" (to quote Frances and Joseph Gies). Medieval illuminations depict numerous toys—tops, kites, puppets, pinwheels, and rocking horses. By the 1200s lead soldiers and glass animals were being made. By 1400 there were *professional* toymakers in Germany. None of this bespeaks disconcern for children in traditional families.

We can go much further back than the Middle Ages and still find no indication of a time when natural parents were unconcerned for their offspring. We note Cicero's statement that "nature implants in man above all a strong and tender love for his children." We observe the carts, hoops, jacks, and yo-yos the Greeks produced for their children, and the balls, dolls, rattles, boats, marbles, and wheeled horses the Persians provided for theirs. We can go back to ancient Egypt, where artists liked to depict children in busy activity with their parents, where medical texts discussed childhood illnesses and prescribed opiates to make youngsters more comfortable when suffering with sickness, where even modest-income families would show their respect for deceased youngsters by burying their playthings with them. These sound like parents devoted to their young.

Life *was* frequently harsh for youngsters in earlier centuries. But then it was harsh for all age groups. And while different cultures have varied in their accomodation of juveniles, only someone determined to ignore an overwhelming amount of historical and scientific evidence could fail to notice that traditional families have always and *innately* shown deep interest in the welfare of their issue.

The natural two-parent family has given children what they need far more consistently than any other social setting. The reality is, it has "child-friendliness" built right into it. It evolved specifically to optimize human development, and has been doing that job effectively ever since men and women first came out of the Garden, or down from the trees, eons ago.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT THE NATURAL FAMILY?

Over the years, what has probably distinguished the natural family most from other forms of human association is what it has not been—temporary, contingent, to be maintained so long as convenient, or based on the wonderfulness of its members. The area where nuclear families differ most from other kinds of alliances is in what members will do for each other when they are undeserving or when there is no rational reason. Rescues from burning houses are commonplace within the family, rare outside it.

It's a great pity that modern parlance so consistently diminishes the concept of "family." Employers and advertisers now refer to their commercial enterprises as families without even blinking ("Here at the Midas Muffler family..."). Since Mario Cuomo gave his famous "we're all family" speech to the Democratic National Convention in 1984, politicians all across the nation have been dutifully patting the heads of their "voter family."

When it's not comic, this can be quite annoying. The truth is, the family is much bigger than our public relationships. It isn't a simple matter of being "better"—family ties can be difficult and even painful. They are just *deeper* than other kinds of links, because they are far more demanding.

Families place serious constraints on individual freedom. It is precisely because family obligations come at a cost that they are so solemn, and so highly prized by most of us. Any "family" that exists without limits, without costs, is not a real family at all. It neither promises nor delivers the mutual sacrifice that is the source of the natural family's power. The late Christopher Lasch argued that "the attempt to redefine the family as a purely voluntary arrangement...grows out of the modern delusion that people can keep all their options open all the time, avoiding any constraints or demands as long as they don't make any demands of their

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own or 'impose their own values' on others." The bonds linking members of the traditional family do not pretend to be easy and immediately advantageous. They are very different from the relationships we seek with our accountant or car dealer or doubles tennis partner—where we seek a "good deal," and appreciate and stick with it as long as there is gain to be had.

When one looks carefully at the new "family" arrangements being promoted as substitutes for the traditional family today, it isn't their newness that troubles so much as their oldness—they look like old, common relationships of expedience that have always been a dime-a-dozen (to no one's disadvantage until they started masquerading as the more important thing of "family"). These new kinds of "families" are often *just* like tennis partnerships or business relationships. The problem isn't that they are bad, but rather that they aren't enough. When accepted in trade for the bonds of the traditional natural family these modern households usually represent a sharp sacrifice in quality. We all need pals and partners. But if pals and partners are all we've got, we will eventually be lost.

NEW FAMILIES VERSUS TRADITIONAL FAMILIES IN PRACTICE

Pooh-poohing the importance of traditional families, former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder once wrote that "I think a family should be defined as 'wherever you go at night and they can't throw you out.'" I see two problems with such a definition. One is its cold minimalism. A proper family does an awful lot more than just not throwing you out. Even more glaring is the basic oversight in Schroeder's statement: The problem with modern as opposed to traditional families is precisely that they are more likely to throw their members out in the night, which is the reason we have so much social disorder all around us.

Take unmarried parents. Cohabitating couples may start out with every intention of being as constant as any old wedded pair, but the simple reality for a child today is that if your parents are not married, the odds that your father will be gone from the house several years down the road are something like ten to one. Are the advocates who would substitute "consensual unions" for marriages aware that they are three to four times more likely to break up than legal marriages? (This is true even in Sweden—where cohabiting couples are a mass phenomenon undergirded by an enormous state apparatus of tax subsidies, guaranteed benefits, and social privileges, where such unions enjoy absolute legal equality with marriages.)

Likewise, apologists for easy divorce often insist that the breakup of a marriage doesn't need to bring a cessation of effective parenting. But the fact is that it usually does. (See "Divorce's Toll on Children" in the May/June 1996 issue of *The American Enterprise*.)

Or take the "blended" family. Made up most often of a mother and her fatherless children plus a new lover or husband, it is often trumpeted as a solution to the clear disadvantages of the single-parent household. How many of the people promoting this new type of family realize that a child living with one natural parent and one stepparent is up to fifteen times as likely to be abused as a child living with two natural parents? We have data showing that children growing up in step-families are far likelier to drop out of school, to initiate early intercourse, to experiment with drugs and alcohol, to get in trouble with the law, and to end up with emotional and academic problems. Strikingly, children from step-families have a behavioral profile much more like that of single-parent children than like children from traditional two-parent families. Indeed they even carry some *extra* disadvantages above and beyond those plaguing mother-only families (like the abuse problem noted above). The step-family may solve the *poverty* risks that haunt the single-parent family. But the record shows that second marriages provide no solution to the damaging psychic problems that result from the breakdown of the natural family.

Or take homosexual pairing. It is theoretically possible for two men to pair off in a stable couple that is about as loving and faithful as the typical husband and wife marriage. Such unions, however, are exceedingly rare. A major study published in 1981 by psychologist Alan Bell and sociologist Martin Weinberg of the Kinsey Institute for Sex Research found that only 2 percent of all homosexuals could be classified as monogamous or semi-monogamous (defined as 10 or fewer lifetime partners). Fully 43 percent of all homosexual men surveyed reported having 500 or more sex partners in their lifetime. In a 1982 survey of AIDS victims conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the *median* number of lifetime sexual partners was 1,100, with a few of the men reporting as many as 20,000. A book by psychiatrists Marcel Saghir and Eli Robins compared sexual experience of a sample of heterosexual and homosexual men and found that 72 percent of the heterosexuals had fewer than eight lifetime partners, as compared with 1 percent of the homosexuals. Whereas 75 percent of the homosexual men reported more than 30 partners, not one heterosexual man did. (Lesbians, who are rarer than homosexual men, are far less promiscuous.)

THE DECLINE IN EXPECTATIONS OF LOYALTY AND LOVE

The lack of fidelity that is inherent in the typical homosexual relationship, the lack of stability that characterizes the typical non-marital heterosexual union, the lack of control demonstrated by large numbers of step-fathers, all of these disqualify those relationships as reliable mass substitutes for the natural fam-

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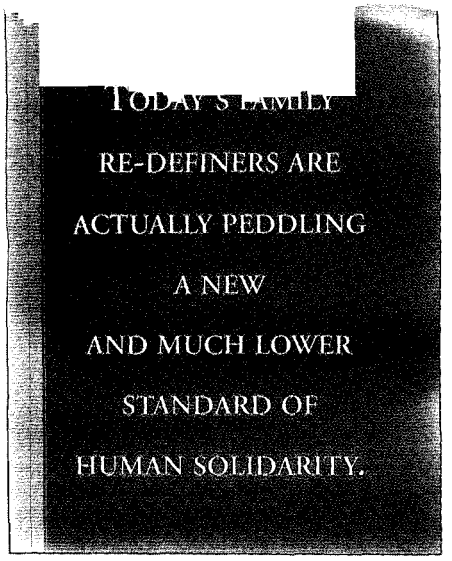

ily. There are of course individual cases and exceptions. And goodness knows, plenty of natural families fall short on commitment and fidelity these days. But social observers must interest themselves in general tendencies. While no human structure will be perfect, it is essential that we preserve those that come closest over time to consistently fulfilling our most important individual and societal needs.

Judged on those grounds, there is no adequate stand-in for the traditional family of blood or legal and religious profession. Those channels alone have produced the loyalty, permanence, and protection that children and adults need. Those institutions alone are able to convince large majorities of the population to accept responsibility for the effects of their intimate relationships.

Today's activist push to get the public to embrace non-traditional "families" grows not out of some fresh confidence in the adequacies of the experimental household forms, but rather, I suggest, out of a profound sense of *resignation*—out of a sad new willingness to give up on domestic trust and love. Even partisans of "new family forms" like sociologist Judith Stacey admit that the divorced households, cohabitating couples, single mothers, and so forth that now compete with traditional families are exceedingly *fragile* structures. These modern families are lonely places, women's places where men merely drift in and out, where little is expected of other people, of the other sex, or of life.

One reviewer described Stacey's 1990 book *Brave New Families* "as grim a catalogue as Emile Zola's *Germinal* of everything that can go wrong with human interaction." The two California clans profiled by Stacey are packed with single mothers, divorces, blended families, homosexuals, latchkey kids, walkaway fathers, people living together, and births out of wedlock. There are neglectful careerist parents, drug-addicted children, drug-selling children, a suicide, sexual abuse, and a family member who attempts to kill herself when her husband impregnates a lover. There are lesbian affairs and feminist conversions, and born-again reconversions. You get the idea.

And the really interesting part is the way Stacey chooses to sum up the lessons of her (entirely non-fiction) book, which is with this statement: "The family is not here to stay. Nor should we wish it were. On the contrary, I believe that all democratic people, whatever their kinship preferences, should work to hasten its demise...the 'family' distorts and devalues a rich variety of kinship stories...there is bad faith in the popular lament over the demise of the family." (By the way, Stacey's own informants are among the folks, by the end of the book, who are "lamenting the demise" of traditional families. But never mind.)

Rather than bringing us some newly broad definition of relatedness and commitment, today's family re-definers are actually peddling a new and much lower standard of human solidarity. "The horrifying bravura of this new kind of family," comments writer Alvaro de Silva, is that it is "based on the denial of true love.... Love and generosity have been replaced with lust and selfishness." In short, what we are witnessing is a radical decline in expectations in our family lives.

ENEMIES AND FRIENDS OF TRADITIONAL FAMILIES

Among elites, Robert Nisbet reminds us, the grudge against the family goes way back: "From Plato's obliteration of the family in his Republic, through Hobbes, Rousseau, Bentham, and Marx," Western intellectual life has long been characterized by "hostility to family." Franz Kafka's dictum that the middle-class family is the closest thing to hell on earth has by now been parroted by a whole generation of college professors. The contemporary women's movement is more or less founded on this argument. Betty Friedan, a moderate among feminists, referred to "the comfortable concentration camp" of traditional family life.

Hostility to the traditional family is rooted most deeply today in two influential sectors—Hollywood and our universities. The typical sentiment was expressed a few years ago by Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison, who told an interviewer "I don't think a female running a house is a problem, a broken family.... The little nuclear family is a paradigm that just doesn't work.... Why we are hanging onto it, I don't know." You may have seen the bumper sticker sold by the National Organization for Women which adapts an old ban-the-bomb slogan to proclaim that "One Nuclear Family Can Ruin Your Whole Life." A broad alliance on the Left, notes sociologist Alice Rossi, now shares the view that "the nuclear family and monogamous marriage are oppressive, sexist, 'bourgeois,' and sick."

Of course that argument is less popular with average Americans than it is with pop stars and feminist activists. In polls, huge majorities of Americans from all groups say they would welcome greater societal emphasis on "traditional families" (and that they would also like more emphasis on religious belief, less emphasis on money, and less emphasis on sexual freedom). The famed psychologist Lee Salk once told me that among the real-life people he saw privately each week in his practice, there existed a powerful hunger for a revival of traditional family patterns in their own lives. "They tell me the so-called 'new' families just don't work, functionally." And he reported that "this is true even of the individuals who appear to be locked into anti-traditional roles themselves."

As we've moved from rhetoric about family "liberation" to actual experiments with visible results, the bloom has gone off the romance for untraditional families. Suddenly, the natural family doesn't seem so unnecessary and oppressive after all. Many are even coming around to G.K. Chesterton's view. The traditional family, he said, "is the factory that manufactures mankind."

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Custom-Built

Two essays on local patriotism

Does Shorty Live Here Anymore?

By Bill Kauffman

The nearby village of LeRoy—pronounced La-Roy by its residents; and Leee-Roy, as in Selmon or Jordan, by the rest of us—is a gold mine of nicknames. Its leafy streets are populated by characters like Pickle, Boomer, Weegie, and my favorite, the late great Mr. "Eggs" Bacon.

But a fissure has developed. The Interstate, that human conveyor belt and model of government-subsidized mobility, opened a LeRoy exchange some years ago, and Rochester yuppies who didn't mind a half-hour commute could purchase their own little piece of quaintness. An unpalatable cleft resulted, and nowhere is this more evident than in the use of sobriquets. Old-time LeRoyans (including several relatives of mine) still traffic in nicknames, but the newer folk, for the most part, do not. It's not that they don't want charming monikers hung 'round their necks, it's just that they haven't *earned* them. For most nicknames attach themselves in childhood and are not portable: Abandon the scene of your boyhood and bid farewell to Tiny, Tim.

To acquire a nickname is easy; to maintain one is harder, as it requires continuous residence in one place. This is why almost no one in the transient quarter of Washington, D.C., has a nickname—except for manufactured or self-applied ones, such as the absurd "Comeback Kid" that Clinton hung on himself.

The same is true in sports. We hear laments that nicknames have disappeared from the pros—Rube and Mudcat and Duckie have given way to, at best, such infelicitous media inventions as "The Big Hurt" or "Mr. October." (Can you imagine addressing a friend in so stilted a manner? "Hey, The Big Hurt, let's grab a beer.")

In our town we have had a minor-league baseball team for nearly 60 years—the Class A Batavia Clippers—and while our current overlords, the Philadelphia Phillies, seldom send us the Moose Kromkos and Sneaky Gradys of yesteryear, the players are merely the supporting cast anyway. The richness, the continuity, the meaning is supplied by the fans, and the thousand and one nights we have shared, in chilly Junes and dying Augusts.

My father was a Clippers batboy in the 1940s, and from him I have learned of the pepperpot second baseman who'd yell, "Whaddaya want, egg in yer beer?" to picky hitters (when dad tried that on his mother, he got a bar of soap in his mouth). Young and old alike know about the night of the dense fog a half-century ago, when the right fielder carried a ball out to his position each inning until finally a visiting batter knocked one over the cloud-shrouded right-field wall, and the right fielder taught the impressionable youth of Batavia how to *really* rob a home run.

I am passing on this lore to my daughter, who is barely three. She sits with me in the bleachers, as I once sat with my family. (And, once, our knight in shining catcher's pads—Dave Bike, where are you?—who, after getting tossed from a game for using a hoary epithet came up and sat with us in the stands, just us kids, and bought us pop and hot dogs. How rare the 20-year-old player who has the wisdom to understand what this means to children.)

I also take my daughter to Batavia High football games. We sit briefly on a rickety bleacher on the visitors' side, where the embittered ex-jocks sit, cursing the coach's play calling, the referee's sight—and woe betide the black player who messes up. But let the spectator's third cousin make a block on a punt return and it's whooping and hollering and "waytago Jimmy!" and high-fives all around. At the games I see timeless friends and the older boys (nicknamed all) who walked as giants when I was young—the quarterback who went away to college and came back a lawyer, the good-time-Charlie who became a cop, the faded jock who nightly replays his broken-field touchdown run on a barstool. The paunch advances as the hairline retreats, and someday I will be like my grandmother, who makes almost weekly trips to the funeral parlor to say good-bye to friends she has known for 80-plus years. Teachers in rural schools speak of the comforting sense of familiarity that long years in one place can bring: Pretty girls beget pretty girls, just as the wild boys and their police-blotter antics are renewed with each generation. The names and faces remain the same; only the hair lengths change.

With shared memory and the mythicization of the everyday our lives take on meaning. The alternative is a life lived on the edge of the abyss. We lose ourselves in crowds, yet a terrible fear of anonymity haunts many Americans: We want to be known, remembered, thought of, and this is only possible in small communities and networks of families. Those cut off from such possibilities are driven to freakish acts of exposure, such as appearing on "Jenny Jones" or "Meet the Press."

Yet external pressures conspire to drive us away from the familiar, toward the abyss. Consider a pair of colloquialisms.

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Communities

Illustration by Mary Shelley

"He'll go far," approving elders say of promising youngsters, with the implication that success can be measured in the distance one has traveled from home. If, on the other hand, we say of a boy, "He's not going anywhere," we are not praising his steadfastness but damning him as an ambitionless sluggard. Absence may make the heart grow fonder, but love's greatest demand is immobility.

Our hollows aren't sleepy enough; but then, they've never been. Even Washington Irving complained, "There is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap and turn themselves in their graves before their surviving friends have traveled away from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds they have no acquaintance left to call upon."

Last fall our county historical society was wracked by that bane of all thoughtful people everywhere—*divisiveness.* For the first time in over a century, the presidency was contested. As we finished our pork chops and got down to the messy business at hand, a nice young community college instructor who had just moved here from Brooklyn, 400 miles away, stood up and said, "How can we vote on candidates if we don't know anything about them? Can't they each give a two-minute speech or something?" He was greeted by a gust of good-natured boos. He sat, bemused and embarrassed. A woman kindly explained to him, "But you see, we *do* know them. Everyone knows everyone else. They don't have to say anything." Speeches, and the webs of dissimulation the glib can weave, were unnecessary: We knew the character, the background, the families of the candidates, and so, unlike the votes we cast every four years for the unidimensional TV creatures who would be President, we marked our ballots with confidence. The result was a landslide.

"Restoring civil society" is the Next Big Issue among the rootless Ph.D.s and hyperkinetic politicians of America—men who have "gone far." But civil society is that historical society meeting, as it is also spinster librarians compiling town histories in self-published books, volunteer firemen and bingo callers (often one and the same), and the boys slugging 'em down at the St. Nick's Club. Intellectuals

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who push "civil society" on these folks are about as convincing as Jimmy Swaggart lecturing an 83-year-old virgin in Shreveport on the virtue of chastity.

A few months back, I caught one of the civil society gurus on television, their true and only milieu. How happily I clicked off his scowling face. For it was a glorious October morning, when I walk with my wife and daughter through the park my father trod as a boy, and his father before him. My daughter collects chestnuts that drop from the trees that supplied me and my brother. That she will do the same with her children, and they with theirs, sustains me. For as the great-grandmother tells the boy Douglas in Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*, "No person ever died that had a family."

Patriot Alley

By Edward E. Ericson, Jr.

Every Fourth of July, we neighbors gather early in an alley. It's an alley with pretensions; it's called Hollyhock Lane. The hollyhocks are gone now, and the concrete is purpled by mulberries instead. We rise to see the Hollyhock Lane Parade; then half of us repair to the alley for a patriotic service. This has happened 63 times before. Attendance has been rising in recent years, and in 1997 there will be more than a thousand people on hand, approaching some of the big turnouts of yesteryear.

The Calvin-Giddings Patriotic Association runs this show. Always multi-ethnic, the area is now also multi-racial. If you move onto the 800-900 blocks of Calvin or Giddings, the streets between which the alley runs, you had better clean up and paint up and help with the planning, or the neighbors will talk about you. Imagine the shock of the family that was closing on a house purchase, only to learn that their unfenced, terraced back yard provides the annual program stage.

Even those of us who go year after year are a little surprised that a traditional celebration of this sort continues to attract strong interest in the 1990s. After all, it's a throwback. It's often hokey. Three blocks away, teen shooters routinely make the newspaper with their deadly gunplay. But in this alley we do pretty much the same thing our immigrant forebears did. They probably did it better, but at least we still do it. As the smiles all around say, we love it for the sheer happening of it. This is how to make time stand still.

The parade floats compete in two categories: patriotic (four contestants) and environmental (six).

At night over public TV we can see the downtown glitz and faux and striving. Here we see a plain parade and an unchanging ceremony with no outside talent. It's pure ritual, with the meaning mostly remembered, and we revel in the effortless charm of the ordinary. Highways are packed with Americans leaving town for the holiday. Here we plan our summers so we can stay home and mill around in an alley that for 364 days a year is nondescript.

The parade began in 1934, when four fathers, looking for something to drain the energy out of their sons, decided to march through the neighborhood playing their horns. A woman now about 80 who was there at the creation says that the only song they all knew was "Onward, Christian Soldiers." A grumpy old neighbor, awakened by the unexpected clatter, called the cops. Trouble. It was 5:00 A.M.! For lack of a parade permit, the police closed down the show. On July 5, the four fathers went down to City Hall and got a permit for the next July 4. The cops happily changed sides and have ridden escort ever since, sirens sounding. This is how a tradition starts.

In 1935 the Screech Owls, Inc., of Grand Rapids, Michigan, civilly delayed reveille until 5:45 A.M. The march ran only the length of the alley. After flag-raising and the national anthem, a full hour, 6:00-7:00, was given over to firecrackers! Then came the parade: "Each kid, and this includes the grown-up kids as well, will please bring a drum, horn, flag or all three." 7:30 was time for a "Peaceful snooze (Try and get it)."

By the next year, reveille had been moved further back to 7:00. The city newspaper took interest in the celebration in 1938: "So far as is known here, the Grand Rapids community is the only one in the country staging such an event." By 1939 the order of activities had pretty much settled down to what we have today, parade preceding program and fireworks no longer mentioned. The 1940 poster reads in part, "We will always remain a liberty-loving nation, tolerating no dictatorships." In 1941 the patriotic association filed articles of incorporation.

Now, at 8:00 A.M., the calliope hauled out of the local museum each year awakens the open-windowed slothful for blocks around. We reach curbside around 8:30, parade starting-time. It loops through several blocks, and most of us move to see it twice, there being not all that much to see. Those on the curb are as interesting to watch as those in the street. I look for those I know. I watch a mixed-race feminist student clapping—for the strolling politicians? I espy a former student, now a Presbyterian minister known to join gays in marriage. I greet a smiling Italian-American man from the local conservative think tank. I hook up with a genial left-wing black colleague; no arguments today. *Unum* overrides *pluribus*.

Here comes the parade, random order. A man on a unicycle—old Hollyhock tradition—with a kid on his shoulders. Someone in a full-body Goofy costume—good thing it's cool today. A modern fire engine; an antique fire engine; a Steelcase semi, shiny as always. A 20-strong band tootles, its one practice over, and I see my next-door husband and wife and daughter whose instruments I never hear at home. It's called the Hollymock Band, and the music is okay.

Now for the floats. They are on kids' red wagons; the Rose Parade this ain't. They are being judged, with prizes to be awarded. Kid-ridden bikes with crepe-pa-

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per-festooned spokes are too many to count. They must stay behind a rope being walked along the route; and parents, on foot or on bike, are interspersed to accompany the littler ones. Where is the dog that pulls the wagon that carries the tyke? Here are 15 motorcycles, riders black-jacketed. They must not be Hell's Angels; I see a 60-year-old man known to have done time as an elder in his conservative church. Then come the convertibles, antique to kids but nostalgic for oldsters. They carry signs for political office-holders and challengers, but the pols know to walk, not ride. Their juvenile underlings pass out stickers, little flags, Tootsie Rolls. The pols have cheek-aching grins, point to folks they know, sometimes veer over to the curb for a handshake with an old friend.

Vern Ehlers, our congressman and a Berkeley-trained physicist, sticks out for wearing a sport jacket over white shirt and tie. He says he'll shed the coat for his other three parades later in the day. Shy and formal, he seems more awkward here than when in hearings shown on C-SPAN. He shows up even in off-years, though he's in a safe district that seems not to mind substance over splash. Stickers with his name on them soon adorn many shirts. His predecessor and another former professor at Calvin College, Paul Henry, who died much too young, used to toss out O Henry bars, and in the alley I once asked him where he developed the habit of giving things away.

Then we walk through the shaded alley lined with bunting on fences and garages, and under "Welcome" signs hanging from horizontal ropes we hold our annual rendezvous amidst red, white, and blue. There's coffee for adults, punch for kids. Good music bracketing the program, before and after, comes over a good amplifier from a group that allows itself to be known for this one day as the Hollyhock Jazz Quintet. We Hollyhock veterans recognize more faces than we know names. We chat with those we know, smile with tentative familiarity at those we don't. An

Edward E. Ericson, Jr., is a professor of English at Calvin College, and a Solzhenitsyn scholar who abridged The Gulag Archipelago *in cooperation with the author.*

And now we close, as we have for six decades, with "God Bless America." Strangely, I miss a few notes.

Asian couple, rare here, walks by jabbering in foreign tongue. Pols recognizable from paper and TV give controlled but warm greetings. Do they recognize me? Today I'm an equal-opportunity grinner, wrinkling up toward those I vote against as much as those I vote for. I see a former student who eagerly tells me how she used to ride her bike in the parade. Looking around, I'm impressed by how many college kids are here, pseudo-sophisticated cynicism shed for a day. There's my current favorite five-year-old, adopted from India and living two doors away. "Hi, Ericson." Lifting her, "Hi, Angela. Are you having fun?" Yeah.

A woman from Giddings Street emcees, smooth at the mike. As the flag goes up the little pole, teens costumed as Uncle Sam and Miss Liberty lead us in the pledge of allegiance. Kids, like the adolescent girl next to me, seeing hands go over adult hearts, follow suit; some know all the words. A strong-voiced woman leads us in singing the Star-Spangled Banner; we are loud, hearty, astonished by ourselves. The prayer is offered by a Catholic priest from the local parish. I'm startled when he ends "in Jesus' name," more startled by the loud "Amen" from the crowd. Protestants, probably.

It's time for introductions of public office-holders, first "our man in Washington," then state senator, state representative, county commissioner, mayor, city commissioner. Each gets to wave to the crowd, and each gets good applause, but none gets to say a word. We are patriotic today, not political. So the challengers, though allowed to march, are not introduced by name, just given a general hand for their presence.

The speaker gets five minutes. We've had some big names, one of whom was the local boy who went on to be President, Jerry Ford. We've even had a couple of imports, such as a congressman from California. We're now back to the original spirit with a local speaker—lo! a young neighbor just a couple of years out of my classroom and now into organizing inner-city kids for urban gardening and for making and marketing their own brand of barbecue sauce. He speaks about regeneration, about welcoming the young into our cherishing of the American heritage. He has a good joke and gives a good talk in the genre remembered from his childhood.

Prizes for the floats are now announced, first-, second-, and third-place in each of the two categories: patriotic (four contestants) and environmental (six). In "patriotic," there just happens to be a tie for third-place, so no group has finished last. And now we close, as we have for six decades, with "God Bless America." Strangely, I miss a few notes. Glancing furtively around, I see I am not alone in experiencing a very brief affliction of the throat.

We're off now to the rest of the day, living in the '90s again, off to sailing and sunbathing at the Big Lake or fishing at one of the many small lakes or shooting a round of golf (which will have to be truly horrible to cast a pall over this day). To do what we ought to do and to enjoy doing it—that makes us feel good. There's some strength in this old country yet.

The alley empties. The kids leave with popsicles, successors to the paddle pops of yore. The silly things are colored red, white, and blue.

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Glimpses OF A Traditionalist Counterculture

BY MAYER SCHILLER

Hearing adolescents today, amidst the decadence and distractions of the late-twentieth century, is not easy. Is it realistic to expect that typical young Americans can still be convinced in large numbers to respect their ancestral faiths, to adopt old-fashioned virtues and manners, to respect elders and authority, to seek civility and practice self-restraint? Or are the competing values of the shopping mall, MTV, and the dubious "morality" bequeathed by the '60s too tempting a siren song for average teenagers to resist?

In particular, can high schools help lead teenagers through this difficult task—a combination of education and resistance? It is precisely in high school, when the child has emerged from the natural obedience of his early years but has yet to form mature convictions, when the allures of modern bliss are most tempting. This is when parents need help in keeping the value of old wisdoms alive in their children's minds, and in keeping the worst of the new seductions fenced out. One critical question for many parents today is whether they can reasonably expect to have their children's schools on their side in carrying out this complicated process of filtering and affirming.

To answer that question, I recently spent time with the faculty and students of four schools that have made the transmission of healthy traditions to adolescents the central part of their teaching mission. Two of the schools are Catholic, two are Jewish. All of them are passionately devoted to timeless, orthodox visions of their faiths. Do these remnants pledged to eternal verities have any prospect of succeeding with contemporary children? Of surviving as institutions? Or are they fossils—relics of a time dead and gone?

IN MOSCOW, PENNSYLVANIA, IN A LARGE BRICK BUILDING ATOP A HILL, surrounded by broad lawns, the world-gone-mad is locked out. As the student guide of St. Gregory's Academy notes, "It is expected that students will strive to live a sincere Catholic life and act accordingly." The sense of reverence, so necessary for a life of faith, and so difficult today, is demanded. "Students must show respect in word and deed for holy places, holy persons, and holy things." This extends to all authority. They must "show courtesy and respect to adults" and "obey orders and assignments."

This boys-only high school is attended by young men from steadfast Catholic homes. Co-education is frowned upon because "it is an evident fact that the education proper to masculine nature and that proper to feminine nature are different." Also, the wisdom of the past must be respected: "The Church...has always strongly preferred separate schools."

At St. Gregory's, it is assumed that there's a connection between a student's inner life and his outer appearance. Dark trousers, white shirt, and tie (as well as a sport jacket or sweater when the weather is not too hot), black shoes, and dark socks are required. Even while students are relaxing in dormitory rooms, there are rules prohibiting the wearing of crude T-shirts, and "rock posters, advertising, and other material deemed objectionable" are not allowed. The idea is that a person's leisure pursuits help shape his personality.

Yet for all its regulations, St. Gregory's is anything but a grim, tight-lipped bastion. Headmaster Alan Hicks sees his students as "gradually coming to the realization that happiness is the result of a well-ordered and virtuous life." The school's task is to break the boy's attachment to "banal and sensational things and entertainment." This is done not merely by forbidding the bad but by "providing an alternative." Students are fed a steady diet of art and music, both popular and profound, drawn broadly from the best of human creation, not just from the narrow ghetto of modernity.

Once, a fairly stable set of moral norms permeated American life in the classroom, on the ball field, and at home. Today, though, St. Gregory's must deprogram. The virtues of sportsmanship, discipline, and loyalty are emphasized. According to Hicks, the Christian gentleman is "strong, virile, and courageous," but will "never cause pain and is always kind and polite." The ultimate goal is, of course, man's supernatural relationship with God. But St. Gregory's believes this must be pursued through everyday living, because when "a human being's emotions and imagination are sound, he will be better disposed to grace."

Parents are an important part of a St. Gregory's education. A recent letter they received from Hicks shortly before Christmas vacation urged them to keep their children away from "television, unwhole-

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some teenage music, hanging out with questionable companions. We see the effects, good or bad, of the boys' home lives when they return."

Although not every student at St. Gregory's succeeds—and occasionally some are asked or opt to leave—the vast majority seem to be prospering. Robin Ekeya, a sophomore, finds the school "one big happy family, where the teachers want to help us." John Clark, a junior, sees the dress code and discipline of the school as "good training for life." He doesn't think the rules are excessive. They "have good reasons, which are always explained to us." He adds that "no one dislikes the teachers, because we see they care about us."

"All this white shirt, 'yes sir,' getting up when the teacher comes in—do you find it annoying?" I ask one student.

"No, it trains us to behave properly. What annoys me is how other kids live. No respect or purpose in life."

THE YESHIVA UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS IN UPTOWN Manhattan doesn't have the full dress code of St. Gregory's, but by the standards of contemporary public schools it is still quite demanding. No jeans, polo shirts, sneakers, or long hair are allowed. What might most strike outsiders about YUHS is the length of its academic day and the detailed demands of Jewish Orthodoxy to which the school is pledged.

The school, numbering some 400 boys, is part of the Yeshiva University complex located in the Washington Heights section of New York City. Limited dormitory facil-

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ities result in a student body that is largely bused in from throughout the tri-state area. The school is what is commonly referred to as "modern Orthodox," which means that unlike the strictest Orthodox practice, students dress like contemporary Americans and pursue secular studies. Among the more traditional Orthodox, ancient patterns of dress (black coats, hats, and so forth) are normal, and knowledge other than the purely religious is only grudgingly pursued.

Students at YUHS travel considerable distances to attend the school, often commuting over an hour each way. The sense of parents is that the school is rare in offering a rigorous Talmudic curriculum alongside a top-notch array of general studies. The long day begins at 8:00 with morning prayers that last until 9:00, followed by breakfast. Eating is not permitted before the services. At 9:30, religious studies begin, continuing until 12:30. After a 40-minute break for lunch the standard high school courses are offered. The day concludes with dismissal at 6:20 P.M. Classes are held on Sunday but not on Friday, in deference to the approaching Jewish Sabbath.

YUHS is a community school in the truest sense. It caters to students of varied academic accomplishment and religious commitment (although all are Orthodox). The school does not have the luxury of selectivity and of a total atmosphere like at St. Gregory's. Accordingly, YUHS's attempts at imparting the basics of Judaism to its students are not without tension. The vast majority of students, however, seem to accept the school's ways, without shying from criticism of what they see as its faults.

A conversation with a cross-section of seniors showed broad satisfaction. "I don't feel that I'm missing anything being here," said Srulee Hercman. Jeremy Wimpfheimer sees the school's religious environment as crucial. "We're able to live Judaism here. All the school's demands are proper. They are just demanding what the Torah demands."

According to many students, YUHS allows them the best of two worlds. They can study and practice their faith while also experiencing the outside world, albeit in a filtered form. According to Adam Mermelstein, "the school takes things from the outside world and makes them Jewish." Public school is simply not an option because, in the words of Eric Distenfeld, "If you go there you can forget about God."

"Would you send your children to a yeshiva like this?" I queried a student. "Definitely. This is the only way you can really learn about Judaism. Plus you can learn about God. In public school they can't even mention Him."

There were more dissenting voices in YUHS than in the other schools I visited. Some students would prefer that the school be either more or less religious. This is probably due to the greater diversity among the student body. Yet the school seems to have mostly succeeded at keeping modern society's vices at arm's length, while giving its students a solid grounding for life.

NOT ALL CATHOLICS SEE THE CURRENT POPE AS THE CONSERVATIVE FIGURE the mass media depict. Many traditional Catholics view him as the leader of a process, begun in the 1960s by Pope John XXIII and Vatican II, that has jettisoned and distorted basic aspects of their faith. To these critics, the decline in Catholic practice over the past four decades is a direct result of this process of betrayal. Perhaps the best known of these traditionalists is the late French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

An American hardliner of this type is Bishop Clarence Kelley, who heads the St. Pius V Academy in Oyster Bay on Long Island. The school is quite clear as to its orientation: "Doctrine, morals, and worship are all practiced and taught according to the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church, as they were practiced and taught before Vatican II."

Begun in 1972 as an outgrowth of the chapel of the same name, the school runs from kindergarten through twelfth grade and enrolls about 100 students. Housed in a rented facility, the academy is co-ed by financial necessity. The children are well-behaved and classroom walls are covered with posters, maps, and charts drawn from the kinds of "basic knowledge" curricula that were standard in public schools until fairly recently. Christmas decorations are everywhere, and in that too I was reminded of the public school I attended in New York City in the 1950s.

Many of the staff are nuns, and I was ushered upstairs by one of them to meet the principal, Mother Mary Bosco. She was in the middle of running the elementary students through rehearsal of a play to be presented to parents before Christmas vacation. There was no misbehaving on the children's part, despite the fact that more than 25 of them who constituted the chorus were sitting around with little to do between infrequent singing parts. Mother Bosco exhorted her young actors to face the audience and speak up. She brooked no nonsense.

Her stern stage demeanor was a far cry from the warmth, grace, and humor she exhibited later when we met in her office. She related with humility, but clear conviction, her estrangement from the public schools and the Vatican II revisions of her youth. It was a long odyssey, but eventually both she and her mother became Catholic traditionalists. She patiently explained to me the school's approach to the present pope. "We teach the basics of the faith in the younger grades, and by the time the students are older they are capable of drawing their own conclusions about Rome today. When they reach the older grades we discuss the crisis in the Church with them."

The school has a fairly selective admissions policy, and those who get in but are not committed to its spiritual vision have generally left before high school. As at St. Gregory's, the students are uniformly respectful in their demeanor. White shirts and ties are required for the boys, and the girls wear uniform dresses designed, they say, by their well-liked bishop himself. To an outsider, the combination of manners and traditional formal attire is stunning. One is transported back across the decades to the 1950s.

Mother Bosco suggests to me that most of the students

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will tell me they like the school despite its discipline—which I saw firsthand when I walked in on a tongue-lashing she was giving a high school boy who "answered back" a lay teacher. The criticism was withering. In a lengthy, private meeting I had with the eleventh and twelfth grades, the principal's prediction proved true. The good-humored students say they would like to have more classmates, and the boys want better athletic facilities. The complaining, however, is good-spirited. When the conversation turns serious, they unanimously say the academy is where they would like to be. James Curatello, who formerly attended public high school, says that there, "no one cares about you. Here all the teachers care about us." He sees the dress code as relieving students of the pressure to keep up with fashion styles. Jessica and Lorraine Pirozzi feel only sorrow towards those who are not exposed to the high standards of the academy.

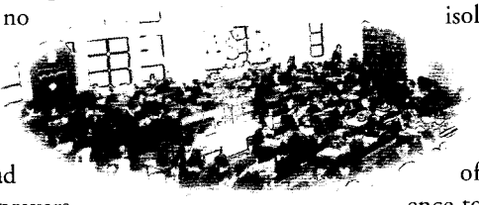
I ask one student, "Do you feel isolated?" He answers, "No, we don't feel isolated. Who would want to be in public school? You know what goes on there."

Some will see a Catholic school that rejects Vatican II as extreme. The students I met, however, were fun-loving and robust. And after reading two issues of the school's yearbook, it's clear that despite their firm loyalty to eternal things, they are as capable of jokes and foolishness as any adolescent.

IN THE WINTER OF 1956, HASIDIC JEWISH RABBI JACOB JOSEPH TWERSKY led a small band of his followers out of New York City to found New Square, the first all-Orthodox Jewish village in the world, in southern New York state. Today, due to large families and the attraction of his experiment to outsiders, the little village has grown into a small city numbering some 6,000 souls. Residents tend to see the contemporary world as a place full of negative influences, from which they attempt to shield their children in their formative years.

In order to achieve this, New Square bans television, movies, and non-religious music of any sort. The students who attend the village's high school are generally unaware of the culture running wild just outside New Square's borders. The school system serves 2,000, with high school students representing about a third of that number.

The boys at the Yeshivas Avir Yakov school, which I visited, all dress in the long black suits favored by Hasidic Jews, and sport beards and peyos (side curls). Their daily schedule is, by American standards, painfully long. With the exception of two one-week periods of religious holidays, there are no vacations in New Square. Studies begin at 7:00 in the morning with two hours of Talmud study. Morning prayers commence at 9:00 and last till 10:00. Breakfast concludes at 10:45 and another study session runs till 2:00 P.M. This is followed at 4:00 with yet another session until 7:00. The day concludes with evening classes till 10:00 p.m. For much of the day, students pour over their books with study partners in a huge, well-stocked library. The system seems to work. When I visited late one winter afternoon, they were almost uniformly engrossed in their books and oblivious to my presence.



New Square's total divorce from contemporary America has created a cadre of young men who view outside society with a combination of detachment and pity. For them, the lively prayer and joyous song and dance of their holy events is all they desire in the way of "recreation." In fact, they see the regimen of their lives as ideal. In the words of 17-year-old Samuel Stern, "It is better to spend less time idle. Even if it's hard to study all day at the beginning, eventually it becomes easy and a source of pleasure."

New Square students are constantly taught that the blemishes of modern society should not cause them to dislike those culturally trapped in it. But the school's isolation from the outside is something the students I spoke to saw as positive. "Here a person's life has purpose," says Yitzchak Sofer. "You know why you are alive. There, everyone is running about, but no one knows where they want to get to."

"But you have a very long day in yeshiva," I said to one student. "Do you feel that you're missing something?" "Missing? I only feel sorry for those Jews that don't have what we have. Our day is too short."

Unlike the other schools I visited, Avir Yakov does not seek to integrate broad cultural learning into its curriculum. This is foremost a religious school. That and the community's physical isolation eases the task of keeping alive the traditional Jewish faith. Although it also limits the relevance of this school's experience to other Americans, its purity provides a model that inspires.

MODERN MAN NOT ONLY THINKS DIFFERENTLY FROM HIS FOREBEARS. He walks, talks, sings, and plays in new ways that separate him from his ancestors. One hallmark of much modern thinking and playing, and of much modern education as well, is a rejection of God, universal morality, and truth. Another is the belief that there is no possible identity larger than the self. Other symptoms include the lack of dignity in demeanor and dress, the spurning of eloquence in speech, and the prevalence of violence and perversion in public expression and art. Our lack of connection to the past and the best it has to offer made it easy for all this ugliness to take root in our communities.

The men and women who are running the schools I've profiled above, and the parents who are sending their children to them, have in many cases concluded that the only way to rescue souls from today's cultural barbarism (there is no better word) is to set up a *counterculture*. This is a difficult, often artificial undertaking with some clear trade-offs. But many Americans, and especially (though definitely not only) religious parents, now feel they *have to* flee the public schools. So they home school, or send their children to an assort-

"HERE A PERSON'S LIFE HAS PURPOSE. THERE, EVERYONE IS RUNNING ABOUT, BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THEY WANT TO GET TO."

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Traditional Education Is Progressive

by E. D. Hirsch, Jr.

I would label myself a political liberal and an educational conservative, or perhaps more accurately, an educational pragmatist. Political liberals really ought to oppose progressive educational ideas because they have led to practical failure and greater social inequity. The only practical way to achieve liberalism's aim of greater social justice is to pursue conservative educational policies.

This is not a new idea. In 1932, the Communist intellectual Antonio Gramsci detected the paradoxical consequences of the new "democratic" education that stressed naturalistic approaches over hard work and the transmission of knowledge. Writing from jail (where he had been imprisoned by Mussolini) Gramsci observed that

> Previously pupils at least acquired a certain baggage of concrete facts. Now there will no longer be any baggage to put in order.... The most paradoxical aspect of it all is that this new type of school is advocated as being democratic, while in fact it is destined not merely to perpetuate social differences but to crystallize them in Chinese complexities.

Gramsci saw that it was a serious error to discredit learning methods like phonics and memorization of the multiplication table as "outdated" or "conservative." That was the nub of the standoff between himself and another prominent educational theorist of the political Left, Paulo Freire. Like Gramsci, Freire (a Brazilian) was interested in methods of educating the poor. Unlike Gramsci, Freire has been quite influential in the United States.

Like other educational progressives, Freire rejected traditional subject matter and derided the "banking theory of schooling," whereby the teacher provides the child with a lot of "rote-learned" information. This conservative approach, according to Freire, numbs the critical faculties of students and preserves the oppressor class. He called for a change of both content and methods. Teachers should present new content that would celebrate the culture of the oppressed, and they should also instruct in new methods that would encourage intellectual resistance. In short, Freire, like other modern educational writers, linked political and educational progressivism.

Gramsci took the opposite view. He held that political progressivism demanded educational traditionalism. The oppressed class should be taught to master the tools of power and authority—the ability to read, write, and communicate—and should gain enough traditional knowledge to understand the worlds of nature and culture surrounding them. Children, particularly the children of the poor, should not be encouraged to follow "natural" inclinations, which would only keep them ignorant and make them slaves of emotion. They should learn the value of hard work, gain the knowledge that leads to understanding, and master the traditional culture in order to command its rhetoric, as Gramsci himself had learned to do.

History has proved Gramsci a better prophet than Freire. Modern nations that have followed Gramscian principles have improved the condition and heightened the political, social, and economic power of their lower classes. By contrast, nations that have adopted the principles of Freire (including our own) have failed to elevate the economic and social status of their most underprivileged citizens.

Gramsci was not the only observer to predict the inegalitarian consequences of the educational methods variously described as "naturalistic," "project-oriented," "critical-thinking," and "democratic." I focus on Gramsci as a revered theorist of the Left in order to make a strategic point. Ideological polarizations on educational issues tend to be facile and premature. Not only is there a practical separation between educational conservatism and political conservatism, but there is an inverse relation between educational liberalism and social liberalism. Educational liberalism is a sure means for preserving the social status quo, whereas the best practices of educational conservatism are the only means whereby children from disadvantaged homes can secure the knowledge and skills that will enable them to improve their condition.

Unfortunately, many of today's American educators paint traditional education as the arch-enemy of "humane" modern education. Even everyday classroom language unfairly pits the two alternatives against one another. Here are some typical descriptions used by progressives to compare old and new methods:

Traditional	vs.	Modern
Merely verbal	vs.	Hands-on
Premature	vs.	Developmentally appropriate
Fragmented	vs.	Integrated
Boring	vs.	Interesting
Lockstep	vs.	Individualized

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Parents presented with such choices for their children's education would be unlikely to prefer traditional, merely verbal, premature, fragmented, boring, and lockstep instruction to instruction that is modern, hands-on, developmentally appropriate, integrated, interesting, and individualized. But of course this is a loaded and misleading contrast. Let's look at those simple polarities one at a time.

Traditional vs. Modern Instruction. Reproduced below is a typical progressivist caricature of traditional knowledge-based education:

> The emphasis that permeated the traditional school was recitation, memorization, recall, testing, grades, promotion, and failure. And for this kind of education it was necessary that children primarily listen, sit quiet and attentive in seats, try to fix in their minds what the teacher told them, commit to memory the lessons assigned to them, and then, somewhat like a cormorant, be ready at all times to disgorge the intake.... This fixed, closed, authoritarian system of education perfectly fitted the needs of a static religion, a static church, a static caste system, a static economic system.

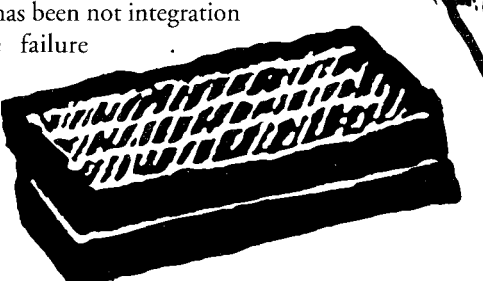
This argument ignores the fact that traditional knowledge-based schooling is currently employed with great success in most other advanced nations. It fails to note that challenging subject matter—the core of traditional education—can be taught in a lively, demanding way.

If parents were told straightforwardly that the so-called "untraditional" or "modern" mode of education now dominant in our schools has coincided with the decline of academic competencies among our students, they might be less enthusiastic about the experiment. When these dismal outcomes are pointed out, progressive educators usually reply that progressivism has never been tried "properly." That is false. It is merely the fail-safe defense that apologists use for all unsuccessful theories.

Merely Verbal vs. Hands-on Instruction. The idea that students will learn better if they see, feel, and touch the subjects they are studying has such obvious merit that it would be amazing if traditional education did not make use of multisensory methods of teaching. And indeed, if one studies the history of educational methods, one finds that every traditionalist theorist advocates hands-on methods where they lead to good results. The hidden progressivist agenda on this issue lies in the disparagement of verbal learning. An essential aspect of understanding in human beings is the ability to speak or write about what one has assimilated. Disparaging verbal learning is especially harmful to children who come to school with restricted vocabularies because of family disadvantages.

Premature vs. Developmentally Appropriate Instruction. A fear of "premature" instruction has led to the removal of significant knowledge from grade-school curricula. Once again, the primary victims of this impoverishment of education are disadvantaged children. Advantaged children gain much of the withheld knowledge at home. If "premature" instruction is such a grave risk, why do young children of comparable ages in other lands absorb such knowledge with great benefit and no ill effects? The label "developmentally appropriate" is generally applied without any empirical basis—simply on the basis of a "gut reaction" by progressive educators.

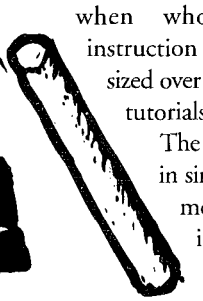
Fragmented vs. Integrated Instruction. Both traditionalists and progressives prefer instruction which shows how things fit together and at the same time helps secure what is being learned by reinforcing it in a variety of contexts. The pseudopolarization over "fragmented" teaching has been exploited ever since the teens of this century to disparage the direct teaching of subject matters such as mathematics, spelling, and biology in classes that are specifically devoted to those topics. The whole outdated concept of subject matters is to be replaced by "thematic" or "project-oriented" instruction. The result has been not integration at all but the failure of students to learn the most basic elements of the different subject matters.



Boring vs. Interesting Instruction. This opposition is used to withhold academic subject matters such as ancient history and science from children in the early grades on the grounds that true education proceeds from the child's own experience rather than externally "imposed" concepts. Because it is true that children learn best when new knowledge builds upon what they already know, progressives insist that early schooling should be limited to subjects that have direct relevance to the child's life, such as "my neighborhood" and similar "relevant" topics.

Yet every person with enough schooling to be reading these words knows that subject matters by themselves do not repel or attract interest. An effective teacher can make the most distant subject interesting, and an ineffective one can make any subject dull. The presumption that the affairs of one's own community are more interesting than those of faraway times or places is contradicted in every classroom that studies dinosaurs and fairy tales. Progressives warnings about classic subject matter being "boring" or "irrelevant" simply conceal an anti-intellectual, anti-academic bias.

Lockstep vs. Individualized Instruction. Traditional instruction is said to impose the same content on every student, without taking into account the child's individual strengths, weaknesses, and interests, whereas modern instruction is tailored to each child's individual temperament. Unquestionably, one-on-one tutorials are the most effective mode of teaching. How, then, can we explain the paradox that individuals learn more and better in schools where greater emphasis is placed on whole-class instruction than on individualized tutoring? How do we explain the research finding that even students needing extra help make more progress when whole class instruction is emphasized over individual tutorials?



The answer lies in simple arithmetic. It is impossible to provide

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Underachieving America

The latest in a series of rankings of schoolchildren from different countries was recently released by a team of Boston College researchers. Half a million youngsters in 41 different nations or territories took tests that measure achievement in mathematics and science.

In mathematics, American eighth-graders ranked 28th out of 41 countries. In science, the U.S. students rated 17th.

To illustrate the achievement gap between U.S. students and students in the top-rated nation (which was Singapore on both tests), the researchers provide several illustrative analogies:

The advantage that Singaporean eighth-graders hold over their American counterparts in math is six times as big as the spread between a full grade level (seventh to eighth grade) in the U.S. In science, the Singaporeans lead by the equivalent of three grade levels.

In math, the top U.S. youths scored the same as average youths in Singapore.

Along with these measures of achievement, the researchers studied the curricula used by students in each of the 41 nations. They found that the mathematics taught to American eighth-graders is taught in seventh grade in most of the other countries, and that the highest scoring nations teach algebra and geometry to all eighth-grade students. U.S. students get those subjects later, or not at all.

—The editors

Science

Math

effective one-on-one tutorials to 25 students at a time. When one student is being coached individually, 24 others are being left to their own devices, usually in silent seatwork. When, on the other hand, knowledge is effectively given to the entire group simultaneously, more students are learning much more of the time. The occasional individual help they receive is all the more effective. By contrast, classrooms that march under the banner of individual attention are often characterized by individual neglect.

In short, many progressive educational assertions that have attained the status of unquestioned fact by being repeated constantly are huge oversimplifications. They wither under close scrutiny. And they have done serious harm.

Among other results, hostility to traditional schooling methods and subjects has fostered inequality. The record is clear. In the period from 1942 to 1966—before progressive theories had spread throughout our schools—public education had begun to close the economic gap between races and social classes. But after 1966, as SAT scores went into steep decline, the black-white wage gap abruptly stopped shrinking.

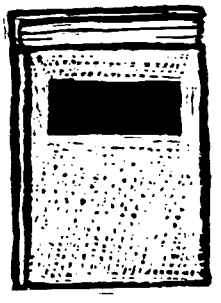
Black Americans currently earn about 16 percent less than whites at the same grade level. Social scientists studying this have recently shown that 12 out of those 16 percentage points can be explained by the fact that blacks have been less well schooled. When black and white earners are matched by their actual educational attainment, rather than just the grade level they achieved, the black-white wage disparity drops to less than 5 percent, and some of this remainder can be explained by factors other than racial discrimination.

It is poor children who have been hurt most by the dominance of "progressive" ideas, but they are not the only victims. Almost all American children have been receiving inferior schooling that hinders them from developing their capacities to the fullest. Compared to the rigorous educations received by many Europeans and Asians, most American children are "underprivileged."

Is there an available alternative to today's failed progressive education? Yes. That alternative is knowledge-based education.

I presented for knowledge-based education in my 1987 book *Cultural Literacy.* Since then, thanks to some very independent-minded principals and teachers, I have gained valuable direct experience with teaching challenging subject matter in early grades. In 1990, Dr. Constance Jones, the principal of Three Oaks Elementary School in Fort Myers, Florida, made her large, mixed-population public school the first in the nation to follow the principles of *Cultural Literacy.* The stunning success of Three Oaks then led another principal, Mr. Jeffrey Litt, to introduce the same principles to his school, the Mohegan School, No. 67, located in the South Bronx. The Fort Myers experiment received a lot of attention, but it was the remarkable early results achieved in the South Bronx that drew the attention of network news programs, *Reader's Digest,* and other magazines and newspapers. Public notice for both schools led other

Stretching Jesse Jackson



...When I was in the sixth grade and our family had just moved up to the housing projects, we went to Mrs. Shelton's class, and she was writing these long terms on the board. We kept saying, "This is the sixth grade, not the eighth." And she turned around and said "I know what grade this is. I work here. These are no longer big words, they are polysyllabic terms, and over here's a dictionary and a *Roget's Thesaurus,* and right down the hall is a library, and there's something called the Dewey Decimal System. I will never teach down to you. One of you little brats might run for governor or president one day, and I don't want to be found guilty."

—Jesse Jackson, "Meet the Press," 12/22/96

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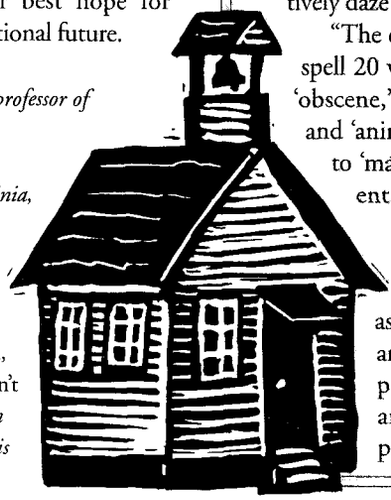
elementary schools to make the arduous shift to a solid, knowledge-based curriculum. The education press now calls our school reform effort the Core Knowledge Movement. It has been fully adopted in more than 350 public schools in 40 states, and a much larger number of schools are successfully using the foundation's principles and materials.

The fact that so many energetic principals and teachers have been willing and even eager to break out of "progressive" education and return to more effective traditional methods is our best hope for America's educational future.

E.D. Hirsch, Jr., professor of education and humanities at the University of Virginia, is the author of Cultural Literacy *and the new book* The Schools We Need, and Why We Don't Have Them, *from which this article is adapted.*



High Standards Sparse Resources Big Results

It is instructive, and a bit shocking, to look at what average American schoolchildren were being taught in their schools just a couple generations back.

About 15 years ago a woman named Avis Carlson published a short book describing her upbringing in a typical small farm town in Kansas in the early 1900s. At that time, all eighth graders in the state had to take a standardized achievement test to complete their schooling. Carlson writes:

"Recently I ran onto the questions which qualified me for my eighth grade diploma. The questions on that examination in that primitive, one-room school, taught by a person who never attended a high school, positively daze me.

"The orthography quiz...asked us to spell 20 words, including 'abbreviated,' 'obscene,' 'elucidation,' 'assassination,' and 'animosity.' We were also required to 'make a table' showing the different sounds of all the vowels....

Among the other eight questions (each subject had ten questions) was one which asked us to 'divide into syllables and mark diacritically the words profuse, retrieve, rigidity, defiance, priority, remittance and propagate.'

"Two of arithmetic's ten questions asked us to find the interest on an 8-percent note for $900 running two years, two months, six days; and also to reduce three pecks, five quarts, one pint to bushels.

"In reading we were required to tell what we knew of the writings of Thomas Jefferson, and for another of the ten questions to indicate the pronunciation and give the meanings of the following words: zenith, deviated, misconception, panegyric, Spartan, talisman....

"Among geography's ten were these: 'Name three important rivers of the U.S., three of Europe, three of Asia, three of South America and three of Africa.'

"As one of physiology's ten we were asked to 'write 200 words on the evil effects of alcoholic beverages.'

"In history we were to 'give a brief account of the colleges, printing, and religion in the colonies prior to the American Revolution,' to 'name the principal campaigns and military leaders of the Civil War,' and to 'name the principal political questions which have been advocated since the Civil War and the party which advocated each.'"

Avis Carlson passed this exam in 1907 when she was 11 years and eight months old.

Certainly there were problems in one-room schoolhouses. Low standards, however, was not one of them.

—The editors

SCHILLER, *continued from page 41*

ment of parochial schools. A wide range of educational options and institutions now offer Protestants, Catholics, and Jews a refuge from the deluge. While the ways of life these sanctuaries provide may appear wildly reactionary to some, the fact is a mere 30 years ago they would have seemed perfectly mainstream. Such has been the speed with which our wider society has jettisoned its cultural inheritance.

The loss of innocence, respect, and purpose among children today is stark. Never mind today's loss of the traditions that give us a dignified place in a larger world. Many children are not even getting the basic tools they need to navigate the world, understand themselves, and communicate with others. And the dominant modernism that has created all these disasters increasingly tolerates no dissent. Speech codes, sensitivity training, anti-religious lawsuits, book bans, and the like make traditionalist cultural remnants feel like criminals.

And unlike the French decadents of the late nineteenth century (or the American cultural radicals of a generation ago, like rock musician Lou Reed), today's cultural decadence has no grace, style, or other hint of a search for transcendence. The decadence which envelopes us now is dull, habitual, and thoughtless.

The schools I visited for this article are part of a countercultural protest against all that. They are fairly pure versions of a movement that includes many thousands of other places and people acting on the same impulses. In many ways, these Americans represent a beacon of hope in our darkness—the hope that it is still possible to choose and follow a life which is not dominated by contemporary fashions and corruptions, which is more in keeping with the faiths, thoughts, and ideals of earlier generations of european civilization.

The individuals I interviewed at these schools all acknowledged a moral responsibility to care about their societies and fellow citizens. But before attending to that difficult task, at this late hour, most have concluded that they must first solidify their faith and deep traditions—within themselves and their children. This they have decided to accomplish within deeply orthodox schools for the young.

And in these places I found young people experiencing the robust joys of youth, in combination with an exalted pursuit of traditional faith.

Rabbi Mayer Schiller teaches Talmud at Yeshiva University High School in New York City.

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TRADITION AND THE MILITARY

☆ An Interview with James Webb ☆

James Webb isn't likely to forget military tradition as he works in his Arlington office overlooking the Iwo Jima Memorial. The walls, shelves, and tables bristle with mementos of his varied life: military honors; a model of the three-soldiers statue from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (he served on its planning committee), an Emmy won covering the 1983 Marine barracks bombing for the "MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour," and bullets from the Civil War.

A 1968 graduate of the Naval Academy, Webb served in Vietnam as a Marine rifle platoon commander, earned high honors for valor, and was evacuated after he suffered serious injuries protecting a subordinate from a grenade blast. Upon leaving the Corps, he earned a law degree at Georgetown University before writing the first of his four novels, *Fields of Fire,* a Vietnam tale that sold a million copies and was nominated for a Pulitzer. In 1987, James Webb was appointed Secretary of the Navy.

Webb is currently working on another novel. He was interviewed by Scott Walter, Keith Hutcheson, and David Broome.

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TAE: How important is tradition for the military?
MR. WEBB: It's the foundation of the military. The thing that sustained me in combat was the notion that I was accountable to the people whom I was leading and to the traditions of the Marine Corps. That's the bedrock.

TAE: The central military tradition is the warrior. How is he made?
MR. WEBB: In any battlefield scenario, maybe 10 percent of the people are at the tip of the sword. I wouldn't say that the central tradition of the military is to become a warrior. I would say that the most respected tradition in the military is the warrior tradition.

I grew up in the Air Force. My father was a career Air Force officer who had not been a college graduate; he flew bombers in World War II and worked his way up. I was able to watch the whole Air Force thing as a young kid—family dislocations, the bomber thing, the fighter thing, the missile thing.

Then I went to the Naval Academy. I served as a Marine officer. People generally agree that the Marine Corps has held on to its traditions the strongest and has flourished because of it. From the very first day in the Marine Corps, you are told about its battle history and traditions, although frankly some of this is embellished.

Marines know little things such as that the markings on their uniforms tie into the history of the Corps. The officer cap, for instance, has a *quatrefoil* because when the Marines used to be snipers up in the masts of sailing vessels they would tie ropes on top of their hats so they could be identified by the friendlies and not be shot. The trousers on the dress blues have a red stripe, which only NCOs and officers wear, because at the Battle of Chapultepec in the Mexican War the NCOs and officers stood and fought. This is for the blood that was shed at Chapultepec.

Marines carry the acts of those who went before them as a conscious burden. There were so many times when I was completely miserable in Vietnam—I remember making night combat moves through miles of rice paddies and hating it but finally saying, hey, I'm doing this, but somebody else did something just as hard or worse. You earn the respect of the uniform by what has happened through other people who breathed the dignity into it, and you feel it's part of your obligation to pass that on.

TAE: What did you learn from your father?
MR. WEBB: In this country today, we are very hesitant to talk about white ethnic culture. In 1974 the National Opinion Research Center broke white Americans down into 17 different ethnic strata, and there was more variation within those 17 strata in terms of educational attainment and family income than there was between whites as a whole and blacks.

The historic strengths of those cultures produce different kinds of talent. For example, 40 percent of the partners in major law firms in this country are Jewish. The Jews come from a tradition of Talmudic law. It is passed down from father to son, at the dinner table. In my culture, which is Scottish and Irish, the Celtic culture,

We would go months without bathing, except when we could stand naked among each other next to a village well or in a stream or in the muddy water of a bomb crater.... We became vicious and aggressive and debased, and reveled in it, because combat is all of those things and we were surviving. I once woke up in the middle of the night to the sounds of one of my machine-gunners stabbing an already-dead enemy soldier, emptying his fear and frustrations into the corpse's chest. I watched another of my men, a wholesome Midwest boy, yank the trousers off a dead woman while under fire, just to see if he really remembered what it looked like.

We killed and bled and suffered and died in a way that Washington society, which seems to view service in the combat arms as something akin to a commute to the Pentagon, will never comprehend. Our mission, once all the rhetoric was stripped away, was organized mayhem, with emphasis on both words. For it is organization and leadership, as well as the interdependence sometimes called camaraderie, that sustain a person through such a scarring experience as fighting a war.

☆ ☆ ☆

There is a place for women in our military, but not in combat. And their presence at institutions dedicated to the preparation of men for combat command is poisoning that preparation. By attempting to sexually sterilize the Naval Academy environment in the name of equality, this country has sterilized the whole process of combat leadership training, and our military forces are doomed to suffer the consequences.

☆ ☆ ☆

How do you teach combat leadership? You don't do it with a textbook; you do it by creating a stress environment. My academic education at the Naval Academy always took a backseat to my military education. During our first year, I and my classmates were regularly tested and abused.... We were pushed deep inside ourselves for that entire year, punished physically and mentally, stressed to the point that virtually every one of us completely broke down at least once. And when we finished our first year, we carried out the same form of abuse on other entering classes. That was the plebe system. It was harsh and cruel. It was designed to produce a man who would be able to be an effective leader in combat, to endure prisoner-of-war camps, to fight this country's wars with skill and tenacity. And it is all but gone.

—From "Women Can't Fight" by James Webb,
The Washingtonian, 1979

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although we were at the bottom of that NORC scale in education and income, we have been soldiers for 2,000 years. The military virtues have been passed down at the dinner table. More than half of America's foreign-born Medal of Honor winners were born in Ireland. A big part of that was the Civil War and the potato-famine Irish, but it extends far beyond that, and it doesn't even include what happened on the Southern side in the Civil War. The southern culture is of course very heavily Scottish-Irish.

My family has been involved at some level in every war this country has fought except for World War I, which we somehow missed by virtue of age, although my dad was the only career military person our family ever had. The discussions at the dinner table when I was a kid were, Who were the great generals? Which were the important battles? How do you lead people? How do you motivate them? When somebody tells you you are in charge, what are your obligations to those people? My dad would say there are two ways: you can make somebody do something, or you can make somebody want to do something.

Many of the discussions that I have with my son are the same way. I don't push—it just happens. His mother's father was on Iwo Jima. I did this stuff in Vietnam, and my father did this stuff in World War II. When you see other cultures having strengths that don't require you to go out and get your butt shot off, this particular cultural strength seems thankless and kind of a curse, but it's there.

TAE: Commandant Gray of the Marine Corps had a reading list which included your novel *Fields of Fire*. He said officers should read these things.

MR. WEBB: It was great that Al Gray did that. Al wanted to move the Marine Corps away from feeling like the only way you can define yourself as a Marine is if you run three miles a day and do pull-ups.

The great military leaders have had a streak of poetry in them. I think of a guy named Dutch Schultz, a Marine Corps two-star general who wrote some of the most beautiful war poetry I've ever read. MacArthur was absolutely poetic in the way that he spoke. The best article I've ever read on success in combat was written by George Patton in 1931, when he was a major. If you really want to understand and pass on the traditions of the service, you need to be able to articulate them.

> They stood in the dark on Stribling Walk, surrounded by everything that made it an Academy instead of a mere college. Bancroft Hall was a bulky gray bunch of shadows on one end of the walkway. Mahan Hall was on the other, flanked by Maury and Sampson halls, the face of its ancient clock luminous in the dark: 0545.... They were all named for heroes, for naval warriors. Fogarty and Dean lived in a museum, a monument to war....
>
> "So what does it make you feel?"
>
> "Uh, well..." Dean looked all around him, as if for the first time. *Tired,* he thought, watching the face of Mahan Hall's clock. And *cold.* He clutched his arms to his own breast. No, that's not good enough. "Proud, sir." Fogarty stared at him with that expectant raw intensity, wanting more. He shrugged. "Just proud."...
>
> "Do you know what it makes me feel, Dean?" They turned along the road that fronted on Mahan and picked up Fogarty's usual route, passing the Naval Museum and the Tripolitan Monument. "Eternity." Fogarty glanced quickly at Dean's uncomprehending face. "That's right, eternity. I see all these things and I feel like I'm one small part of something so big and great that it'll never die."
>
> "...I went to a funeral the other day.... It was my best friend.... But you know, I thought, watching him go under like that, I thought, he isn't really gone. He's alive as long as this place is alive."
>
> —From *A Sense of Honor,* a novel by James Webb, 1981

TAE: What are the best American novels and movies about war?

MR. WEBB: A book that is often overlooked, partly because of the timing of its publication, is *Once An Eagle*, by Anton Myrer. Myrer was a Marine in World War II, and in this novel he followed one character from 1916 all the way into Vietnam. That book had a very profound effect on me because I read it right when I got back from Vietnam. It was published in 1968, right after the Tet offensive, when everyone was burned out on that stuff.

I'm still waiting to see a good film about Vietnam. My dad's favorite on leadership, one he made me watch, was *Twelve O'Clock High*, which is a great movie about having to command people under great duress. *The Bridge on the River Kwai* is a wonderful movie. This British commander went through an enormous amount of punishment that he could have avoided in order to make the point to his Japanese captors that this was a military unit, and not a random collection of soldiers, that he was delivering to the prisoner of war camp.

There are two non-American books I would recommend. One is *The Forgotten Soldier*, which is non-fiction, by Guy Sajer. It is the most overwhelming book about war I have ever read. The other is C.S. Forester's *The General*, a novel about how the unimaginative officers who could endure the horrendous World War I battles and still persevere were the ones who floated to the top.

TAE: A recent article in *The New Yorker* quotes former Congresswoman and Armed Forces Committee member Patricia Schroeder saying, without discernible remorse, that in the wake of Tailhook, women and gays in the military, and so forth, "what you've got in the Navy is a culture cracking." Would this be something you agree with her on?

MR. WEBB: There is an old naval saying that it takes 300 years to build a tradition and three days to destroy one. Today's problems go back a ways.

I've recently been spending two or three months a year in Vietnam, and I can tell you they know who won on the battlefield. I didn't say that 10 years ago, but it's very clear now. We defeated the North Vietnamese. They now admit they lost 1.4 million combat soldiers. But the failure of this nation to conclude the Vietnam War satisfactorily left the military under question from the outside, frequently from people who had no

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military experience and who were elected to Congress on virulently anti-military themes.

The real watershed event was the Watergate Congress. When Nixon resigned in August 1974, a lot of Democrats won in safe Republican districts simply on anti-war issues, because no one else was going to run. Tom Downey is a classic example of that. He was around 26 years old, living at home with his mother, never had a job in his life, and all of a sudden, he's a congressman.

In the summer of 1975, the House passed the amendment opening up the service academies to females. This was a watershed event, but it was done without substantive hearings. It was done without asking for the input of the military leadership. They narrowed the issue down to simply a matter of equality. It was not a matter of military performance. That didn't matter. I can't think of another issue passed by the Congress in such a cavalier way that had such a long-term impact in that it diminished the military's ability to defend its own culture.

I was the first Naval Academy graduate to serve in the military and become Secretary of the Navy. When I got there I wanted to give purely military decisions back to the admirals, to give the uniformed military the same kind of authority that it had in the past. But the reality was that by then, with the cultural change that had been happening on the political side, a lot of them were afraid to take it back.

TAE: At one point in the early 1960s, the Army Chief of Staff went to the White House to resign over policies being made in Vietnam, but after arriving changed his mind and went back to the Pentagon. He later said it was the greatest single mistake of his life. Should our military leadership resign when they think the services are being misused for social experiments?

MR. WEBB: First, they should vociferously defend their traditions and culture. In rare cases, a resignation is appropriate. They really haven't done either for a long while.

One of my great heroes is General Bob Barrow, who was Commandant of the Marine Corps in the late '70s and early '80s. In 1979, the Carter administration lined the Joint Chiefs up and ordered them to support eliminating the restrictions on women in combat. I wrote an article strongly opposing the idea, and Barrow called me up the day the article came out. All the Joint Chiefs except for Barrow had said, aye aye, sir, we'll go over to Congress to testify in favor of eliminating restrictions on women in combat.

Barrow told the administration, "Number one, I don't believe that's a legal order. You cannot order me to support a policy that does not yet exist. That is not civilian control of the military; that is civilian manipulation of the military leadership." He told the Deputy Secretary of Defense he was having his aides research whether it was legal to force him to support a proposal not yet established as national policy. And he said if it was legal and he was required to testify with a favorable opinion, he was going to explain to the Congress the circumstances under which he did so. They backed off.

General Barrow took over as the Commandant of the Marine Corps the same way I would take over a rifle company. I'm going to give you the best job I can, and if you don't like what I'm doing, fire me. That is what people need to do.

TAE: Is that Carter administration incident at all analogous to Clinton's policy on gays in the military?

MR. WEBB: The issues of privacy and potential favoritism are just as great in isolated operating units with females as they are with gays. Loyalty, fairness, accountability—that's what makes the military work.

When people ask me about gays in the military, my response is, Why don't you people have the courage to talk about what is happening in the operating units with women?

TAE: When you were Secretary of the Navy, you tripled the number of seagoing jobs open to women. Why?

MR. WEBB: When Secretary of Defense Carlucci came in, he announced that he wanted to remove all the restrictions on combat for women. It was totally contrary to our own administration's policy, but he said, "I don't have Cap Weinberger's hang-ups on that."

I had been receiving pressure to resolve the issue of what exactly is a combat assignment. Where is the line drawn? I wanted the uniformed military to make that decision. So I convened a group of 28 active-duty people, male and female. I sent them around the world. They came back and reported to me through the Chief of Naval Operations, who supported their findings. One of their

continued on page 70

> In recent years, many whose duty it was to defend the hallowed traditions and the unique culture of their profession declined to do so when their voices were most urgently needed. Some are guilty of the ultimate disloyalty: To save or advance their careers, they abandoned the very ideals of their profession in order to curry favor with politicians.... What admiral has had the courage to risk his own career by putting his stars on the table, and defending the integrity of the process and of his people?...
>
> Tailhook should have been a three- or maybe a five-day story. Those who were to blame for outrageous conduct should have been disciplined, and those who were not to blame should have been vigorously defended, along with the culture and the mores of naval service. Instead, we are now at four years and counting, and its casualty list reads like a Who's Who of naval aviation....
>
> If the Navy is to regain its soul and its respect, the answer lies in the right kind of leaders. Leaders who understand that the seemingly arcane concepts of tradition, loyalty, discipline, and moral courage have carried the Navy through cyclical turbulence in peace and war.... It is time to give the Navy back to such leaders.
>
> —From a James Webb speech to the Naval Institute, Annapolis, April 1996

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WINDS OF THE APPALACHIANS

SOMETIMES ONE MAN CAN BUILD A TRADITION

BY KENNETH Y. TOMLINSON

The Father of Bluegrass Music—a big, rawboned, intense, and stubborn man named Bill Monroe—died last year. From Tokyo to Moscow to Nashville (where his high lonesome sound was once little appreciated) there came an avalanche of tribute to the master who created a form of music both starkly new and deeply traditional. A music that flourishes today beyond expectation.

The rural mountain culture that gave birth to bluegrass has nearly disappeared. Cabins that once echoed with children are falling to dust. Hollows have filled back in with spruce, hemlock, and dogwood. The music that captures hardy country life in sound, however, has spread to the most far-flung climes. More than 500 multi-day live bluegrass festivals were staged last year, in virtually every U.S. state plus Canada, and in dozens of other countries as well. It is said there are now more bluegrass bands per capita in the Czech Republic than in Kentucky.

No one suggests that Monroe's music is experiencing anything like the explosive expansion of rock and roll in the '50s, but a study conducted last year by the National Endowment for the Arts showed that public interest in bluegrass is growing faster than any other musical genre in America.

In his last years, Monroe gained the status of a musical icon. "Bill Monroe was that rarest of American musicians—the creator of a distinctive art form," wrote Earl Hitchner in the *Wall Street Journal*. *Rolling Stone* compared him to Duke Ellington. The *New York Times* explained that "Monroe created one of the most durable idioms in American music. The Blue Grass Boys sang in keening high harmony, about backwoods memories and stoic faith, trading melodies among fiddle, banjo and Mr. Monroe's steely mandolin. By bringing together rural nostalgia and modern virtuosity, Mr. Monroe evoked an American Eden, pristine yet cosmopolitan."

Not bad for a kid who grew up practically blind, orphaned at age 11, raised by a fiddle-playing uncle in the impoverished foothills of Kentucky. Pretty impressive for a musician who at one point seemed likely to be overshadowed by his own protégés: By the late 1950s, the most popular bluegrass band in America belonged not to Monroe but to his former sidemen Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs (whose "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" would become the theme of the movie *Bonnie and Clyde*). Nor was Monroe's the most *authentic* sound in bluegrass music in those days; that distinction belonged to the Stanley Brothers, Carter and Ralph. And when it came to musical drive, the other hallmark of bluegrass, it could be argued that Jimmy Martin was the best.

More fundamentally, the entire bluegrass sound came under the threat of extinction in the late 1950s. Music executives in Nashville were shunning bluegrass as out-of-date. Once-popular bands were being decimated by rock's growing domination of American music. In this period, Monroe's band often played in churches, with their compensation coming solely from free will offerings.

How did Monroe weather these crushing pressures without compromising his music? How did he preserve the principles of his art form while guiding it into wider acceptance? The answers to those questions about Monroe and the bluegrass genre are more than footnotes to American culture. They explain how vision, enterprise, sacrifice, and determination go into the building of tradition.

The Monroe story begins in the early years of this century in Rosine, Ky. Bill was the youngest of eight children, plagued with the shyness of a cross-eyed child. When visitors came to hear Monroe's Uncle Pen Vandiver play the fiddle, the child would hide, so ashamed was he of his appearance. Some theorize that Monroe's lonesome high-tenor sound originated from these long hours spent in isolation, listening to the voice of his Uncle Pen's fiddle.

Bill also was lowest in seniority among several brothers, which meant that his siblings Charlie and Birch had already latched onto the family guitar and fiddle by the time he started showing interest in music. In the family, Bill was relegated to the less appreciated mandolin.

In the early 1930s Bill followed his brothers to work in an oil refinery near Chicago. The brothers began performing the music they had learned at home. They did radio shows. Though their music was essentially indistinguishable from other country acts of the time, they soon gained a following. By the late '30s Monroe had formed his own band and won a spot on Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

Monroe fans trace the origins of bluegrass to a recording session that took place in Atlanta in 1941. It was then that the unique sound first emerged. Monroe picked up long-established traditional forms that lay all around him—Celtic fiddle music, black blues, and the *a capella* gospel of the rural church—and melded them in a high-energy mix. The most memorable cut from this session was a hard-driving version of Jimmy Rogers' classic "Mule Skinner Blues." (Little more than a decade later, Elvis Presley in turn launched *his* musical genre with a charged-up version of a Monroe song—"Blue Moon of Kentucky.")

One element of Monroe's final musical blend was absent from the Atlanta session. The distinctive three-fingered-roll banjo sound arrived in 1946, when a young North Carolina mill hand named Earl Scruggs became a member of Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. Monroe and Scruggs were joined by Lester Flatt on guitar and Chubby Wise on the fiddle, and it was in this period that bluegrass music was defined.

By 1949 this band had split with acrimony, in the best tradition of the Appalachian Scotch-Irish. Monroe would be known for low pay throughout the history of his band (at times out of

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self-preservation), and money was an issue for Flatt and Scruggs. But so too was the grueling schedule of live appearances that Monroe insisted on. Every bit as fierce and intense as Monroe's music was his work ethic.

While many have mourned the break-up of the 1946 ensemble, in the decades that followed, scores of great musicians like Jimmy Martin, Mac Wiseman, Del McCoury, Peter Rowan, Vassar Clements, Byron Berline, Richard Greene, and Kenny Baker went on to play in Monroe's band. This amounted to a kind of university experience for players of distinction.

Monroe ranks as one of America's most prolific and inventive songwriters, with hundreds of standards springing from his pen. He freely acknowledged influences from various branches of folk, sacred, and traditional music. He occasionally accepted lyrics and tunes from bandmembers. But when the songs were done, and the Blue Grass Boys played, they did it his way.

There was commanding energy and certainty behind Monroe's musical vision, and he worked band members tirelessly to perfect his sound. In a time when most performers were loose, and hillbilly humor was a staple of country shows, Monroe insisted on precise, disciplined performances. He required right to the end that his band wear coats, ties, and hats. Exacting presentation was important to Monroe, and even when times were bad he never allowed others to question his music's excellence. "Bill made up for his inadequacies with pride," a colleague once said. "He carried a presence about him when he walked on stage. It was as if he willed his own greatness."

For many years, Monroe's iron resistance to compromise was the only barrier protecting bluegrass from being washed away from its moorings by a brackish flood of new pop music. Flatt and Scruggs, influenced by Columbia Records and the hunger to be fashionable, drifted from the purity of the mountain sound, adding drums, harmonicas, and special effects to their recordings. Other bands electrified to make their music more acceptable to country radio stations.

Not Monroe. He insisted that the music remain traditional, acoustic, and undiluted. He insisted that his sound be preserved. His way. And while the modish crowds shifted to other kinds of music, a hard core in the hills, along with their sons and daughters working in the plants of the north, remained loyal to the Monroe sound—to the point that bluegrass and mountain music loyalists took on a fanaticism associated with cults.

But for all the hardships afflicting those who clung to tradition in this period, developments were taking place around universities in urban centers that would eventually reward the faithful and launch the struggling, determined Monroe to immortality. In the wake of a folk boomlet, acoustic music was developing a fanatical following outside the heritage of Appalachia. From Washington Square to Harvard Yard, students were being swept into the music of the mountains. The most significant of these converts, a young scholar named Ralph Rinzler, became Monroe's manager at perhaps the lowest point of his long musical career.

Rinzler, a protégé of Pete Seeger, was an enormously talented musicologist and promoter who later founded the Smithsonian Folk Festival. He was the discoverer of the great blind, traditional acoustic guitarist Doc Watson, whom he found toiling in a rockabilly band in the mountains of North Carolina. Under Rinzler's management, the Blue Grass Boys were introduced to folk festivals from Newport to Chicago, and Monroe was presented as the father of bluegrass. Preserving and extending Monroe's pristine sound became a passion for those whom the music touched.

Essentially excluded from the universe of Nashville country music, banned from popular radio, barred from most commercial shows and concerts, bluegrass fermented in a world of its own. As early as 1962, you could hear the distinctive strains of bluegrass on Saturday mornings in Manhattan, via Columbia University's WKCR-FM. By the '80s, American University's WAMU-FM was blanketing a 100-mile radius of Washington, D.C., with close to 40 hours a week of hard-core bluegrass.

Major record labels largely severed their links to bluegrass after rock rolled in, but a cottage recording industry sprang up specifically to serve this traditional-music fan base. The most significant of these was Rounder Records in, of all places, Cambridge, Massachusetts. County Sales of New York (since relocated to Floyd, Va.) became the direct-mail distributor to bluegrass fans, fueled by a newsletter that routinely panned recordings that fell short of standards.

Perhaps most distinctively, bluegrass took root at outdoor festivals that sprang up from Virginia and North Carolina to Vermont, Colorado, and California. In the early years, these festivals were about the only place in America where mountain patriots with red necks and white socks stood side by side with anti-war hippies. The music was their bond.

Bluegrass musicians who strayed from the tradition quickly lost their public appeal. Earl Scruggs, the banjo great, disappeared into schlocky anonymity after he formed the Earl Scruggs Review in the 1970s, featuring himself on banjo and his sons playing country-rock. Fans saw Scruggs, whose contributions to the roots of bluegrass rivaled those of Monroe, as a traitor to tradition. He soon faded from view.

Guitarist Peter Rowan is one of the university-educated Blue Grass Boys from the early '60s. His "Walls of Time," which he performed as a duet with Monroe, is a bluegrass classic. Later, Rowan became a successful rock musician. But he eventually returned to bluegrass.

In an interview in *Rolling Stone* after Monroe's death, Rowan credits the sheer strength of Monroe's personality as a key to the survival and then rebirth of bluegrass music. Rowan admits that until the last year of Monroe's life he couldn't sit in the man's presence without a sense of awe—and fear. "Monroe was kind of like a mentor figure, a guru. If you really wanted to tune into him, you faced that fire that was in him and it would burn. But it would also light your fire."

Once, Monroe conceded to a young musician that he really could have played and written other forms of music. But he didn't do so—out of a sense of loyalty. To his audiences, bluegrass had come to symbolize a living link to the past.

When Monroe played, it wasn't an individual performer who the audience encountered. It was the winds of the Appalachians, and the mist off the moors of Scotland. It was the primal sound of the past. And they felt at home.

Kenneth Y. Tomlinson, former editor in chief of the Reader's Digest *and director of the Voice of America, lives in Fauquier County, Virginia.*

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BY CURT SMITH

COMEBACK!

The triumphant return of old-style ballparks shows that tradition can be popular

illustration by Mary Shelley

For a half-century after 1910, baseball was worshipped in artful cathedrals of the outdoors. The parks that teams played in were intimate, irregular, and entertaining in themselves. Recall the ivy of Chicago's Wrigley Field. The monuments at New York's Yankee Stadium. Old fields like the Polo Grounds and Forbes Field were personality-packed Xanadus. "They created a common experience," says television's Larry King, who grew up near another temple, Brooklyn's Ebbett's Field. "Across America, entire cities revolved around the ballpark."

Through the 1950s, urban parks seemed like family around America's dinner table. Then Suburban-Ho: Like the rest of the country, baseball left the city in the '60s for safer climes. Cities lost baseball's business, and buzz of conversation. Baseball lost cities' ferment, and wondrous asymmetrical parks. Replacing them were sterile multi-sport mausolea from Anaheim to Queens. "Some bargain," observes poet John Updike. "Baseball got more parking—and parks that starved its soul."

By the late 1980s, such cookie-cutters more befit bullfights than baseball. Then—*mirabile dictu*—the game restumbled upon success. In 1989, the late then-Commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti first saw a model of Oriole Park at Camden Yards. "When this park is complete, every team will want one," he said with his teddy bear of a laugh. Its quirks, odd angles, and individuality marked a return to tradition— the game as it once was, and could be again. "Baseball can be like life,"

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he mused, in that "the keys to the future often lie in the past."

Opened in 1992, Camden Yards became baseball's first "old new" park since 1923. In 1994-95, similar parks opened in Cleveland, Texas, and Denver: Each broke attendance records. Similar sites will open by 2001 in Atlanta, Cincinnati, Detroit, Houston, Milwaukee, Phoenix, San Francisco, and possibly Boston, Montreal, New York, and Pittsburgh. With this second wave of old-fashioned close-is-better, small-is-smarter parks, baseball ends the century where it began—on idiosyncratic fields of real grass. Each of the new stadiums should fly a banner: TRADITION SELLS.

"Baseball's blockheads have never grasped this," marvels NBC broadcaster Bob Costas. "They think newer meant progress—and that progress meant killing all vestiges of the past. But progress happens only when what's built improves the present—which the antiseptic ovals of the 1960s and '70s didn't. Progress is what works." And in baseball today, says Costas, "'Going Back to the Future' isn't a movie, but a practical creed."

Costas despises most of the stadiums built between about 1960 and 1992. Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium and St. Louis's Busch Stadium—each opened in 1966—are hardly distinguishable. In 1970, the Phillies and Reds left Shibe Park and Crosley Field for tombs with all the charm of a K-Mart. "When I'm up at bat," said infielder Richie Hebner, "I can't tell where I'm at."

The new traditional parks, on the other hand, recall pre-WW II fields. Baltimore's Camden Yards, only a pop fly from the Inner Harbor, welded *nouveau* and tradition to form the model. "They took the best of all the old," hails Hall of Famer Brooks Robinson, "and put it into one." Arches and brick expanse mime the old Comiskey Park. Left field is double-decked like Tiger Stadium. The 25-foot-high right-field wall evokes Carl Furillo at Ebbett's Field.

Disraeli said, "What we anticipate seldom occurs. What we least expected generally happens." Unexpectedly, Camden Yards went back/forward to real baseball. Standing roomers pay $3 to watch from behind the outfield walls. Smoke wafts over from Boog's Barbecue on Eutaw Street. Beyond right field stretches the longest building on the Eastern Seaboard, the restored red-brick Railroad Warehouse. It enfolds the park like the houses around Wrigley Field. Ghosts from the former site of Ruth's Cafe, a saloon owned by George Herman Ruth, Sr., father of behemoth Babe, seem close by.

"Old new parks" won't cure cancer, cleanse prime-time television, or again make baseball America's heirloom of the heart. They can, however, illustrate how tradition works, and show how timeless is renewal.

Deep in the heart of Texas, the feeling is the same at the new park for 48,178 Rangers fans. Box seats are just a pickoff's throw—44 feet—from first and third bases. A manual scoreboard drapes left field. In right there is an upper-deck overhang known as The Home Run Porch. Because the park is sunk below street level, it meshes with the neighborhood.

"We had to be careful," Rangers president Tom Schieffer recalls. "We didn't want to have ivy on the walls [like Wrigley Field] *and* a green monster [like Boston's Fenway Park] and a Home Run Porch—it'd be a conglomeration. Instead, we said, 'Let's think why those things are special in other parks and build on the ideas generated.'" The seven scenes of Texas history painted inside the concourse are one unique result.

In Cleveland, the Indians replaced gaping Municipal Stadium with a park that seats 42,865, parallels downtown streets, and exudes charm. The steel framework of Jacobs Field is open, with accents of brick, stone, and glass. The outfield juts out more quickly in right than left, has walls of different heights, and is open to skyline views. At the Indians' pre-1947 home, League Park, you could watch from anywhere and see the players without binoculars. Jacobs doubles back to this earlier age.

At Coors Field in Denver the curiosities include $1 center-field bleacher seats—a.k.a. "The Rockpile." "The Rockies could sell out each game," an executive concedes, "but like the old parks, you should be able to get a ticket at game time. So we sell the bleachers that morning—and you should see the jostling."

Classic redux parks hope to re-create the feeling of an earlier age. At Washington's old Griffith Stadium, protruding houses dented the center-field bullpen. In Philadelphia's Baker Bowl, a fan wrote on an outfield advertisement for Lifebuoy soap: "The Phillies use Lifebuoy and they *still* stink." At Cincinnati's Crosley Field, home runs smashed parked cars, and there was an incline on its left-field terrace. New York's Polo Grounds had a farcical name (polo was never played there) and burlesque dimensions: Depending on where you hit it, anywhere from 257 to 483 feet would do for a homer.

Costas was seven when he first glimpsed the three tiers, insatiable mass, and sloping shadows of Yankee Stadium. "Seeing your first big-league game at an old park is like a rite of passage," he says, "like Dorothy spying Oz." Giamatti never forgot how his father took him hand-in-hand to Fenway Park for the first time in 1948. "The city was all around us," he recalled of Boston's bandbox bijou, "until we went through the ballpark tunnel, and suddenly there were white bases and emerald grass. It was a true coming of age." Giamatti loved the din of noise from the bustle of nearby commerce, and how shopkeepers hailed players as they approached stadium entrances. The atmosphere was a social and economic state fair.

The Red Sox may soon leave Fenway Park—too cramped, run-down, few luxury suites. If so, tradition demands as close a replica as possible. Fenway has been New England's nightclub since April 20, 1912—linking grand sightlines and left-field's Green Monster, muffling pitchers with a blanket of gloom. Such shrines pass from parent to child the joy of rooting for the old home team.

"Old new parks" won't cure cancer, cleanse prime-time television, or again make baseball America's heirloom of the heart. They can, however, illustrate how tradition works, and show how timeless is renewal. From Briggs Stadium via Wrigley Field to Camden Yards and Jacobs Field there is a direct continuum of human experience.

Tradition endures because it works. Baseball's "old new parks" prove that.

Curt Smith wrote more speeches than anyone for President George Bush, and is now a PBS commentator, ESPN documentarian, and college lecturer.

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CLASSIC BUILDINGS IN A MODERN AGE

As the failings of Modern architecture have become glaringly evident over recent decades, the United States has experienced a resurgence of interest in Classical design.

One of today's most prominent Classicists is Allan Greenberg, a Washington, D.C. architect who has designed houses, stores, commercial buildings, new and renovated courthouses, and the offices of the Secretary of State since arriving in this country 33 years ago. Mr. Greenberg, who grew up in Johannesburg—a city he describes as a South African version of Houston, almost entirely a Twentieth Century creation—received his early training there and in Europe.

Here he talks about why Classical architecture is the right visual "language" for American civic buildings.

Greenberg was interviewed by *TAE* associate editor Philip Langdon.

TAE: You've been an outspoken critic of the inappropriate designs used for many of the public buildings erected in the U.S. since about the 1950s. One building you've focused a lot of attention on is the courthouse. What's wrong with the way most courthouses are built these days?

MR. GREENBERG: I first became involved in courthouse projects in the 1970s, and I discovered that new courthouses are often seen by nearly every segment of the population—judges, attorneys, jurors, staff, and the public—as disappointing. A Modern courthouse's public spaces are often unfortunately similar to those of a motor vehicle department or a second- or third-grade commercial office building. The lobbies, corridors, and foyers are often dull, unadorned, seemingly leftover spaces. The message communicated to attorneys, witnesses, jurors, litigants, and the taxpaying members of the public is that they are not important enough to warrant special attention being paid to their need for intellectual and visual stimulation, clear orientation, and physical comfort.

TAE: How does this differ from the message transmitted by a traditional courthouse?

MR. GREENBERG: Many old courthouses have grand public spaces, which still convey an aura of dignity despite what some would consider to be their obsolescence. In the great eighteenth or early nineteenth century courthouses and in other civic buildings of that time, the main public spaces were the most beautiful spaces in the building, because they were the ones where the public was. The fact that the public spaces in an old courthouse provide more than the bare minimum of both quantity of space and quality of design is a celebration of human values and a demonstration of concern for the well-being of everyone using the courthouse. Even when they are overcrowded, they usually provide a sense of order.

TAE: What about attempts to shape courtroom interiors in a more up-to-date way?

MR. GREENBERG: There have been many ideas for reconfiguring the courtroom. One of them is the courtroom in the round. The problem with this is that it violates the symbolism that a courtroom ought to have. The equality implied by a circular form fails to differentiate between the trial participants and to express their roles. The shape of the room and the placement of the furniture and participants in a traditional American courtroom are not arbitrarily arrived at; they grow out of the American view of law. In the United States, a judge is an impartial arbiter and is therefore positioned on a raised podium in the center of the front of the room. Defense and prosecution are equal adversaries assigned tables in the well of the courtroom, facing the judge. The jury box is placed on the side, purposely divorced from the axial relationship of judge, counsel, and public. This placement reflects the impartiality of the jurors who must decide guilt or innocence.

The formal arrangement and design of the courtroom reflects society's views of the appropriate relationship between a person accused of a crime and judicial authority. Seen in this light, the traditional American courtroom layout is a unique and valuable representation of our system of justice and its orientation toward the rights of the accused. It is not a set of functional relationships that can be changed at will.

TAE: Is there a particular reason why courthouses and other important public buildings, until recent decades, were often designed in a Classical style?

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MR. GREENBERG: When Thomas Jefferson designed the Virginia State Capitol and Supreme Court, he based the design on a Roman temple because he wanted to express the continuity of Classical ideas of democracy and rule of law, which were being realized anew in the American republic. Jefferson wanted to demonstrate the intellectual traditions to which Americans were heir, and to signal the greatness to which this country aspired. Classicism is a language that expresses high, democratic aspirations. The exterior character of a courthouse and its relationship to its surroundings declare our conception of the law's role in society.

TAE: But we're not living in the eighteenth century. Is the Classical architectural language comprehensible to Americans today?

MR. GREENBERG: Classicism is the most comprehensive architectural language that human beings have yet developed. I maintain that Classical architecture is still the most potent, the most appropriate, and the most noble language to express the relationship of the individual to the community in a republican democracy. Classical architecture's fundamental subject is the connection between the individual human being and the community—between citizen and government. It's no accident that Classical architecture's birth coincided with the birth of the ideal of democratic government in Athens nearly 3,000 years ago.

TAE: What is it about Classicism that expresses a relationship to human beings?

MR. GREENBERG: A Classical building uses the human figure as the crucial measure of all things. The ancient Greeks used columns and statues of people interchangeably. Columns typically have capitals, like human heads, forming their tops, and they have bases corresponding to feet. The function of the ankle—to transmit the body's weight through the feet to the ground—is performed architecturally by plinths and base moldings. To strengthen the anthropomorphic quality, the upper two thirds of the column shafts have a slight taper, which creates a widened base, like a person with his feet spread solidly apart for balance and stability. This taper—the term for it is entasis—infuses the column with vitality. Similarly, the three-part division of the human body into legs, torso, and head is paralleled by a Classical building's plinth, walls and columns, and roofs—in other words, base, middle, and top.

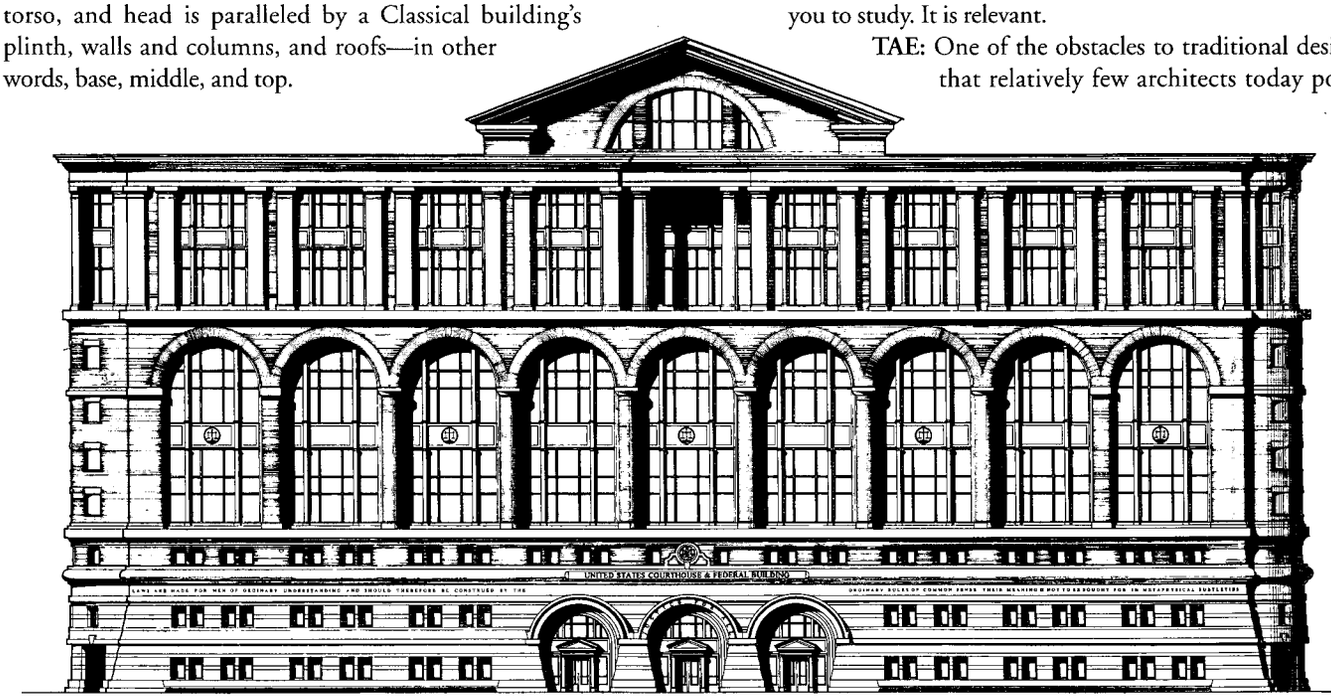
One of the jobs that influenced me in the 1960s was a new courthouse I worked on designing in Alexandria, Virginia. The job eventually fell through, but I approached it as a Classical architect trying to solve problems in the mid-twentieth century, and the building seemed so much more significant than it would otherwise have been. I seemed able, through the mechanism of this architecture, to talk about ideas that the judges found very important. When the judges talked about a dignified building, and they showed me old courthouses in Virginia, and then I showed them a brick, Georgian-inspired courthouse I was designing, we seemed able to communicate in a way that my associate architect, who was developing more modernistic solutions for the judges at the same time, was not able to do. I sensed that if one wanted to seriously discuss ideas about architecture with a client, one had to work in a language of architecture with which the client was familiar, one for which they could cite examples.

TAE: Were there other reasons for your movement toward Classical architecture?

MR. GREENBERG: Beyond the fact that I found it much easier to talk to the public in public hearings and to my clients through the medium of Classical architecture, I was also able to answer one of my earlier challenges: how to build in cities, because the vast majority of successful buildings in cities, past and present, are Classical buildings. Let me give you some examples. The City Beautiful movement in the United States initiated and helped articulate the transformation of American cities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in an extraordinarily successful way. The great parks and public buildings of New Haven, the expansion of the Yale campus where I taught in the 1960s and '70s, were built under this set of ideas. The great bridges of New York and other cities were a product of this great movement. This happened all over the country.

Tradition is a source book. For a classical architect, the past is a series of case studies, which can teach you different lessons about formal manipulation, about construction, about social, political, and other urbanistic questions—about how these challenges were resolved in the past. The past is not dead. It is active and there for you to study. It is relevant.

TAE: One of the obstacles to traditional design is that relatively few architects today possess



Allan Greenberg's U.S. Courthouse and Federal Building, Minneapolis, Minnesota

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enough knowledge to practice it well. Did you have someone who brought you along in this?

MR. GREENBERG: No. But before I went to Europe and then to the United States, I studied at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, a school whose leading light was Rex Martienson, who had been one of the first disciples of [the powerful Modernist] Le Corbusier. Along with two and a half years or three years of a Bauhaus approach to architecture, we also had two and a half years of rigorous Classical education. We studied the history of architecture by the comparative method, where you do measured drawings, to scale, of great buildings. So at the end of five and a half years of schooling, you had a vocabulary of 100 buildings which you knew by heart, by dimension. The great buildings of architectural history were mixed into one's architectural brain cells. We were exposed not only to the history of style but to the history of construction. We learned how Romans built their bridges, how medieval masons built their vaults, how lime and mortar were used in English buildings, and so on.

I kept asking myself, Why is it that the work of the past is so much richer and more urbane than our work today? The buildings of Le Corbusier are fabulous architecture. His buildings moved me in a very deep way, but I sensed there was something about his approach that was destructive.

TAE: Did this have to do with the Modernist tendency to make each building stand out from its surroundings rather than create coherent groupings and unified streetscapes?

MR. GREENBERG: As an architect, I was awed that for over a thousand years, architects and builders in London had added to the beauty of the city, whereas some of the new buildings I saw seemed to divorce themselves from their context and not play a part in this process of accretion. Contrast is a singularly limiting way to relate buildings to a city.

TAE: Do you see widespread use being made of Classicism or tradition today, particularly in civic buildings?

MR. GREENBERG: No. The federal government, the state public works departments, and cities' public works departments are peopled

CLASSICISM & POLITICS

BY FREDERICK TURNER

Before classicism can again occupy a central place in our lives, a monstrous libel must first be undone. Throughout much of the twentieth century, influential segments of the art world have accused classicism of opposing freedom—an allegation that continues to unjustly undermine classicism's influence.

A commonplace in the aesthetic education of my generation was the easy dismissal of contemporary classicist architecture as "fascist." Monumentality, symmetry, mass; the Classical vocabulary of column, arch, dome, and architrave; the use of dressed stone; the sculpted figure—these were, especially in combination, the signals for scoffing. If the offending architecture were safely old, it would be forgiven, but if built in our century it would be linked to Hitler and Mussolini.

The association of classicism with fascism and Nazism extended beyond architecture to Classical painting, music, verse, sculpture, theater, and dance. Even today poets who write in strict metrical form, painters who honor the ideals of harmony, firmness, and utility, actors and directors who tell a coherent story and provoke an audience's identification with sympathetic characters can be accused of crypto-fascist tendencies by avant-garde critics.

Hitler and Mussolini are claimed to be artistic conservatives who used the vocabulary of classicism, especially in architecture, to express their political ideology. Since the fascists rejected modernist art and persecuted those who practiced it, the logical conclusion was that artistic modernism stood for freedom of human expression, while traditional art meant the suppression of creative impulses and the destruction of personal liberty. Or so went the accusation.

This argument, despite some surface plausibility, is riddled with false assumptions. It is simply not true that the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini were conservative. Their policies were radical reversals of traditional relations in their societies. Hitler's party was called the National Socialist Workers' Party, and it is disingenuous to pretend that it did not mean what its name implies. Mussolini's early career and mental formation were those of a socialist, and his program of public works, central control over the means of production, and a national bureaucracy for the general welfare was not profoundly different from the policies of Mao Tse Tung, Fidel Castro, and Kim Il Sung. After five decades of leftist obfuscation and apologetics, it is at last becoming clear that fascism, socialism, and communism were but three competing branches of left-wing ideology. All three shared a suspicion of international banking, hereditary inequality, inherited family wealth, laissez-faire capitalism, individualism, ethnic otherness, and Jews. All three saw the collective social organism as the true unit of humanity. All three, claiming to be creating genuine equality, sought compulsory measures to encourage a sense of mass communion.

Certainly Hitler encouraged Albert Speer to create a new Classical architecture for the Third Reich. Mussolini, too, favored classicizing art and architecture. But as Leon Krier argues in his essay "An Architecture of Desire," Hitler's choice of style may have contradicted his revolution's spirit. The appropriate expression for an efficient totalitarian order, presided over by a planning bureaucracy, and predicated on reducing the individual to a cog in the machine, would surely have been Bauhaus or International Style. The fact that Hitler and his lieutenants preferred Classical art and architecture for themselves is no more significant than the fact that they preferred Cuban cigars and French wine: Classical art was the best quality art available. The corresponding fact that Hitler chose Classical art and architecture as an instrument of his propaganda proves only that as a P.R. man, he knew what he was doing: the Classical art vocabulary is the most expressive and persuasive yet created, and its beauty and

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by architects who graduated from schools in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s and who know little, if anything, about Classical architecture or the larger role that architecture can play in embodying the fundamental ideals of a society and reminding people what those ideals are.

TAE: Are schools and magazines and journals becoming more receptive?

MR. GREENBERG: Yes, but not much. The curriculum at most architecture schools is unique for being so biased, for ignoring so many fundamental factors of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture—a level of bias that would be laughed out of any department of history or political science or English literature. On the positive side, there is a school in New York that teaches Classical architecture part-time, at night. At the University of Notre Dame, you can study Classical architecture and emerge as a competent Classical designer. Architectural magazines are a little more open to publishing Classical buildings than they were in the past. The most significant development, I think, is that there are probably 50 or 60 offices across the U.S. doing this kind of work, whereas 20 years ago there were one or two or three.

TAE: What's needed for Classicism to really flower again?

MR. GREENBERG: What it needs is a President of the United States who knows about and is interested in architecture. I don't want to exaggerate this, but the welfare of architecture in the U.S. has, to a large extent, reflected the interest of a great President. Washington designed Mount Vernon and was very interested in architecture. Jefferson was maybe our greatest architect ever. Madison was interested in architecture. For these people, the architecture of Washington, D.C., and the Capitol, and the public buildings was very important. Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt were very interested. So were Coolidge, and Hoover, which is how the Federal Triangle came into being.

I think a President who is interested in architecture could make a big difference.

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grandeur would be the most effective disguise for the regime's crushing regimentation and savage horrors.

The closer one looks at the classicism = fascism equation, the more fantastic it becomes. Mussolini took a while before he abandoned his modernist *razionalismo Italiano* (which nicely expressed the spirit of the machine-gun by which his armies subdued Ethiopia) and adopted a more classical look, using it to appeal to the humanity and self-sacrifice of the Italian people. Communist art and architecture in the Soviet Union went through exactly the same correction, from the modernist constructivism that truly expressed the spirit of the Gulag, to the triumph of classical idiom, putting a humane facade on an inhuman regime.

If classicism were the ideology of history's villains, we would not find a modern classicism blossoming in the first half of the century in the world's most enlightened, free, and democratic nations. A splendid renaissance of Classical architecture took place in the Scandinavian countries, in Austria, and in France. There was a flowering of Classical forms in architecture, music, literature, and other arts in the U.S., especially in the 1930s.

Rather than accept the fallacy that classicism is inherently illiberal and reactionary, a historian could argue that the perennial association of Classical style with Greek democracy, Roman republicanism, Renaissance humanism, and Enlightenment intellectual liberation makes it the appropriate vehicle for the political ideals of liberty and the consent of the governed. The marvelous organic rhythm by which Classical forms integrate fine detail and large intermediate forms into the grand compositional lines of the whole—an art with an infinity of possible variations—is an apt way of representing democracy's talent for reconciling individuality, intermediate institutions of civil society, and the general public interest.

By contrast, the frequently harsh innovations of modernist art, which reject the mysterious practices of tradition, suggest that modernism is in fact the appropriate expression of the totalitarian state. Political conservatism is not the enemy of freedom—revolutions that overturn tradition tend to result in states that are more, not less, oppressive than their predecessors. The more radically a revolution seeks to change the existing order, the more tyrannical and coercive the regime that follows. The English Civil War of 1640 that overthrew Charles Stuart created the dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell. The English then sensibly carried out a conservative counter-revolution, restoring the monarchy and ushering in three centuries of gradual and prosperous transition to democratic liberty.

At the level of individual artists, the "classicism = fascism" equation falls even further into disrepute. There is evidence that many modernist artists enthusiastically courted Nazi, fascist, and communist regimes. The modern free-verse poet Ezra Pound toadied to Mussolini. Bauhaus artists sought commissions in Nazi Germany until they got discouraged by the cold reception. In 1932, Italian modernists staged a triumphant "Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution."

Meanwhile, Toscanini, the giant of Classical music, defied Mussolini and fled to America. Thomas Mann, perhaps the most artistically conservative novelist of his time, did likewise. The only English-speaking poet who foresaw the "rough beast" of totalitarian terror and gave it its true name was the conservative classicist William Butler Yeats.

Of course there were heroic modernist artists and writers who opposed twentieth-century totalitarianism, and classicists and traditionalists who supported totalitarianism. I do not intend to simply exchange one set of libel victims for another. But I do wish to dissolve the subtle moral and political righteousness that still attends modernist and now postmodernist art. The new emerging classicism of our era should not be burdened by the malicious notion that it is connected to the forces of evil.

Frederick Turner is Founders Professor of Arts and Humanities at the University of Texas, Dallas. This is adapted from an essay originally published in the Fall 1996 issue of American Arts Quarterly.

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THE BAD POET

A TRUE-LIFE CLASH BETWEEN LETHAL MODERNISM AND CLASSIC ART

By Frederick Turner

Zsuzsanna Ozsváth and I have been spending the last few years translating the poetry of Miklós Radnóti, the great Hungarian poet who died in the Holocaust. In her introduction to our translation, Zsuzsi describes his last days:

> From 1940-1944, Radnóti was called up three times for slave labor. Worked to exhaustion in minefields, sugar plants, and ammunition factories during his first two call-ups, he was taken to the copper mines of Bor in Yugoslavia during the last. In the middle of September 1944, however, under the pressure of the Russian forces and the Yugoslav partisans, the Germans had to evacuate the Balkans. Radnóti's squad was force-marched back to Hungary, to be transferred from there to German slave-labor camps. But cold weather, exhaustion, hunger, and savage massacres decimated the marching column: out of the 3,600 men moved from Bor, only 800 crossed the Hungarian border. Marched on through western Hungary in November, Radnóti started to lose his strength. His feet covered with wounds, he could walk no longer. It was probably on the eighth of November that the squad arrived at a town near Gyor and spent the night at a brickyard. Next day, three noncommissioned officers of the Hungarian Armed Forces separated Radnóti and 21 other emaciated and exhausted men from the marching column. Borrowing two carts in which they crowded the sick Jews, the guards made two attempts to rid themselves of the group: they took it first to a hospital, then to a school that housed refugees. But neither had room. Then the soldiers took the group to the dam near the town of Abda. The Jews were made to get out and ordered to dig a ditch. When they finished their work, the guards shot them one by one into the ditch, among them one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century.
>
> Radnóti's last volume of poetry, *Foamy Sky,* was published posthumously in 1946, a volume which did not yet contain the last five poems. Only after Radnóti's body was exhumed were these five poems found, inscribed in the small pocket notebook that he had purchased in Yugoslavia. Two years passed before *Foamy Sky* was republished, this time complete. Since then, Radnóti's work has been republished many times in Hungary, becoming part of that nation's cultural achievement and receiving ever-growing appreciation.

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Budapest, Hungary

I have held that notebook, stained by his fluids of decomposition and now yellow with age, in my hands.

Zsuzsi and I have just flown in to Budapest to jointly receive Hungary's highest literary honor, the Milan Fust Prize, for our recently published collection *Foamy Sky: The Major Poems of Miklós Radnóti.* Zsuzsi is a Holocaust survivor, saved in 1944 from the Nazis in Budapest by her Christian babysitter. Exactly 51 years ago, on December 18th, 1944, Zsuzsi was hiding in an apartment overlooking the Danube, an apartment bought with her mother's last diamond bracelet. Steady shelling was going on, and there were occasional spatters of machine gun fire through the smashed windows of her refuge. The firing was coming from Buda, across the river, where the Russians were preparing to cross and invade the Pest side of the city in the next few days. Zsuzsi remembers that the Danube was dark with blood, and that bright red ice-floes were floating down the river in a midwinter thaw.

"Was the fighting that bitter on the bridges?" I inquire.

"No," Zsuzsi says, "The Hungarian Nazis were shooting thousands of Jewish captives into the river, in a last-gasp effort to get rid of them all before the Russians came."

Zsuzsi, at that time a shy, vivid ten-year-old piano student, did not know that the poet Miklós Radnóti, whose work she would one day translate, had already been dead for a month. Radnóti could have tried to escape and join the partisans, but he believed his captors' story that they were going back to Budapest. Sick with anxiety for his wife, Fanni, who was trapped in Budapest under the bombing, he willingly undertook the death march in order to rejoin her. When he realized that they were not going home but toward the extermination camps in the north, he could march no longer. Fanni survived. It was she who placed her husband's final notebook in my hands.

Budapest was foggy when we arrived, with blackened slush and halos around the streetlamps. But this morning it is bright with fresh snow. I am jittery and anxious; I feel unworthy to receive the prize. Our translations were savagely attacked in *The New Republic* for their adherence to the Classical verse forms of the original. Perhaps our gesture was tilting at windmills, to translate the poems of Radnóti into the same meters in English that they had been given in Radnóti's Hungarian: hexameter into hexameter, sonnet into sonnet, rhyme for rhyme, stress for stress. Were we foolishly trying to turn back the march of cultural history?

Gradually I get my travel moods under control, dress carefully in dark suit, white shirt, tie; and soon Ivan, Zsuzsi's brother, arrives by car with Zsuzsi to pick me up. After all, they have to give the prize to somebody. And it is rather wonderful that the school across the street from Zsuzsi's father's old apartment during the war, two doors down from the pickup point for Jewish deportations, is now called the Miklós Radnóti School, and that little Aron, her nephew, goes there, and that Zsuzsi, who might have been rounded up and shot into the Danube, is now getting her country's highest literary accolade. She certainly deserves it, and it would be pretty shabby not to include me if they were giving it to her. Cheered with this reasoning, I watch the dazzling morning city go by as we drive: the long hill fortresses of Buda, the mosaic-roofed cathedral of St. Matthias, the heroic engineering of Baron Szechenyi's tunnel and suspension bridge, the marble statuary shining in the low sun, the Parliament, the grand streets of Pest named after their poets, the great parks with their gilded-parthenon museums and fairyland skating ponds.

The Academy is a noble building of golden stone in Viennese empire style, set near the Szechenyi Bridge on the east bank of the Danube. The ceremony takes place in a high-ceilinged spacious room with fine bookcases and reading tables, busts of academicians, old masters on the walls, and magnificent chandeliers, where a sumptuous buffet of hors d'oeuvres is set out. There are short speeches by the president of the academy and the chairman of the prize committee. Then each of us is addressed briefly in turn, our hands are shaken, the award medals are presented, and champagne is brought in by waitresses in black and white uniforms. There is a toast.

Afterwards we go back to Zsuzsi's relatives' apartment for dinner. Zsuzsi translates for me the latest review of our book, which has just come out in the leading Hungarian literary magazine. I met the author of it at the reception after the award—Miklós Hernadi, a novelist, sociologist, and translator—and was impressed by his modesty, his evident mental vigor, and his delicate courtesy, not pressing toward an unprofessional intimacy but warm in its praise for our work.

Like us, Hernadi roundly denies the widely-claimed impossibility of poetic translation, and insists that only verse translation can do justice to verse originals. Formal meter should only be trans-

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THE LAST 80 YEARS HAVE SEEN A DEVASTATING DISMANTLEMENT OF ANCIENT TRADITIONAL ARTS. BUT THIS POET'S MYSTERIOUS RETURN FROM THE DEAD SHOWS THAT THE "MEASURED BREATH" OF FORMAL METER AND VERSE CANNOT BE EXTIRPATED.

lated into the identical meter in English. Hernadi suggests (with Radnóti's own agreement) that translation can sometimes *improve upon* the original, because the second poet had the prior guidance of the first in moving from the wordless language of feeling into the grammar and lexicon of a particular human tongue. In his review, Hernadi defends our translation against the attack in *The New Republic*, citing the exact passages the American reviewer (a modernist free verse academic critic) had used to excoriate us as evidence of our insight and poetic integrity. Had revenge been a dish that either Zsuzsi or I could relish, it certainly would have tasted best cold. But our main sense was regret for those readers who had been deprived of Radnóti's poetry by the anti-traditional bias of one reviewer.

The Greek myth of Orpheus, who was the first poet, says that if one possesses a lyre—that is, the art and craft of measured poetry—one can speak with the dead. Through the medium of verse, heroes like Gilgamesh, Odysseus, and Aeneas regularly come back to life today. In this same way, poets like Dante, Blake, Rilke, and Radnóti himself may also be retrieved from the dark. That is what Zsuzsi and I have been doing: Using the ancient forms of poetic meter as our lyre, we speak with a dead man and bring his words back in a new language.

Radnóti was one of a small group of Classicist poets in Hungary, believers in the traditional forms, who fought the evil and lunatic tide of totalitarian ideology as it swept over Europe. He resisted the fashion of free verse. Promoted by the fascist Ezra Pound, this new poetry without meter or rhyme swept literary Europe and America in the period leading up to the war. It still dominates the American academic literary establishment, as the comments in *The New Republic* indicate.

Radnóti battled Hitler with traditional art of the highest standard. "Is there a country," he cries out in one of his poems, as the Soviet and Nazi armies struggled around him, "where someone still knows the hexameter?" Eventually, Radnóti's life was taken from him, but his high art endures—and the result, I tell Zsuzsi, is that one day Hitler will be remembered as a tyrant who lived during the time of the poet Radnóti.

Later, as we drive back to my apartment through the glittering lights of the city and across its tumbled reflections in the Danube, once so red with blood, Zsuzsi and I talk about poetry. It is the work of the poet, we believe, to brood upon wild waters, tame them, and make them speak in the unforgettable and immortal form of measured breath—the ancient prison of Radnóti's last sonnet:

O Ancient Prisons

O peace of ancient prisons, beautiful
outdated sufferings, the poet's death,
images noble and heroical,
which find their audience in measured breath
how far away you are. Who dares to act
slides into empty void. Fog drizzles down.
Reality is like an urn that's cracked
and cannot hold its shape; and very soon
its rotten shards will shatter like a storm.
What is his fate who, while he breathes, will so
speak of what is *in measure and in form,*
and only thus he teaches how to know?
He would teach more. But all things fall apart.
He sits and gazes, helpless at his heart.
—March 27th 1944

The last 80 years have seen a devastating dismantlement of the timeless traditional forms of the arts—recognizable representation in painting, melody in music, human proportion in architecture, plot in fiction, meter and rhyme in poetry. Modernist artists and writers prided themselves on their daring and originality for having purged what they took to be the arbitrary, elitist, and restrictive rules of outdated civilization. But Radnóti's mysterious return from the dead in his poetry is a symbol of the inexhaustible and ever-renewing vitality of the Classical tradition—a tradition that we know not as the property of the West alone, but as the accumulated achievement of many great human cultures. The "measured breath" of formal meter by which the poet teaches us how to know cannot be extirpated, either by the political will of a militant State or by the hostility of a modernist cultural establishment.

The lessons we can draw from Radnóti's life and work suggest a radical transformation in the ways in which poetry is taught today. We need to abandon the modernist picture of progress as the replacement of outmoded forms by more up-to-date ones better fitted to the spirit of the age. Likewise with the "postmodern" view, in which all modes of discourse are on equal footing—that is, no footing at all—because no such thing as universal meaning exists, and all texts are "politically situated." The insistence on situating all things in politics may have been partly responsible for the Nazi and Soviet regimes, and the mass murders of our century in which Radnóti died. Meanwhile, it was Radnóti's faithfulness to the old quixotic poetic standards that brought his writings to us out of the grave.

All is not lost. More and more young artists and poets in contemporary America are awakening to the danger of losing our connection with the dead masters, and are teaching themselves the ancient skills. And they are discovering that in the language of the Orphic lyre, twenty-first century America comes alive in a strange and beautiful way.

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In Praise of ARCHAIC RITUAL

There's Nothing Outdated About Keeping Kosher

by Michael Medved

A few years ago, my daughter Sarah took a stand that greatly upset one of her father's colleagues while making him enormously proud. This small incident illustrates the huge gap between the child-rearing notions of "enlightened" modern society and the views of those who honor ancient religious traditions.

It happened when Sarah was in first grade and I took her along to a television interview. While I answered a few questions about movies, my daughter sat to one side of the set, chatting with the show's associate producer, a capable TV veteran I've known for years. This producer, a single woman of perhaps 35, seemed especially delighted to welcome her young visitor. When I finished my half-hour taping, I saw that Sarah had received a large imported chocolate bar in gold-foil wrapping. "Daddy, look what Cindy gave me!" she said proudly. "But I didn't open it, because I think maybe it's not kosher. Will you look and see if it's okay?"

Our children have lived all their lives in a kosher home, and they know that unfamiliar products should be checked for the little "O-U" marking (or some other recognized insignia) indicating that the food has been inspected for reliably kosher ingredients and preparation. I knew that holding the candy in her plump little hands all that time without unwrapping it represented a supreme effort of the will for my incurably chocoholic daughter. I desperately searched through the German writing on the wrapper, hoping to find some excuse in the fine print she had missed. Much to my chagrin no such indication appeared, and I handed the candy back to my daughter. "I'm sorry, Sarah. I just don't see any kosher marks. I don't know about this kind of chocolate."

For a moment, my little girl seemed so keenly disappointed that I thought she might cry. But then, without hesitation and with great solemnity, she bravely passed the bar back to her benefactor. "Thank you," she said with a shy smile. "I'm sorry. I can't eat it."

The episode might have ended there, but my colleague asked to talk with me alone, in her office.

"I can't believe what I just saw!" she exploded and went on to berate me for what she considered my abusive parenting—for destroying Sarah's sense of fun and spontaneity, encouraging compulsive behavior, and contaminating our child with fearful and superstitious ideas. She found it "scary" the way the child gave up a piece of candy she obviously craved, and believed that this authoritarian emphasis on kosher minutiae would cripple the girl's ability to reach decisions for herself, making her grow up feeling uncomfortably different from other children.

As she talked, I recalled that this angry woman was herself the product of a Jewish home, since no gentile ever would have felt so free to savage several thousand years of our dietary traditions. I'm sure that if Sarah had turned down the chocolate bar because we were organic vegetarians, or because we insisted on some sugar-free, low-fat diet, the producer would have viewed the act of denial with admiration. But because the sacrifice took place in the context of an ancient tradition involving the notion of divine commands, my old friend felt outraged and, on some level, threatened.

No aspect of Jewish life has produced more misunderstanding over the years than the seemingly incomprehensible rules that limit our food consumption. Today, far too many people presume that these regulations played some hygienic or sanitary role when they first arose some 3,000 years ago. Skeptics argue that even if they once made sense, there is no reason modern people living in an era of careful governmental regulation of the food supply should continue to bear such arcane burdens.

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The logic behind this position is sensible, persuasive—and dead wrong. Those who contend that kosher laws are intended to confer some nutritional or therapeutic benefit must explain why traditional Jewish cuisine is, alas, among the least healthful in the world. When you consider chopped liver, hot pastrami, and the like, it doesn't matter whether it's kosher or not—it would be hard to find a nutritionist who would plausibly maintain that it's good for you.

The common assumption that food becomes kosher when "blessed by a rabbi" is also utterly false. A rabbi's blessing can in no way make non-kosher food acceptable, any more than the absence of such words would render kosher food unacceptable. When rabbis work as inspectors of edibles, their job is to certify that the food has been properly prepared and contains acceptable ingredients, not to confer on it any special spiritual state through mumbling some liturgical formula.

For a better understanding of Jewish dietary traditions it helps to begin at a basic linguistic level. The Hebrew word *kosher* doesn't mean "clean," "healthful," "holy," or "blessed." The true meaning is "proper" or "appropriate." Jewish dietary laws aren't so much concerned with some intrinsic quality of the food to be consumed, but with the behavior and integrity of the person consuming it. The purpose isn't health or holiness, but self-discipline and character-building.

The whole of Jewish tradition addresses the same goals. Sabbath observance, daily prayer, Torah study, and the complex holiday cycle are all intended for the refinement of the human being. The Biblical understanding of man suggests both an earthy, animal component (the name "Adam" derives from the same word as "earth" or "dust") and a divine element instilled directly by the Almighty ("And God formed the man out of dust from the ground, and He blew into his nostrils the soul of life," as Genesis 2:7 puts it). The dual nature of this creation, dust and divinity, dictates a perpetual tension between our earth-bound impulses and our godly potential. Jewish tradition strives to maximize that potential and to clearly distinguish human beings from animals.

This distinction is particularly important when it comes to food, since people, like animals, must expend much time and energy securing nourishment for their bodies. The kosher laws at the most fundamental level attempt to separate human beings from beastly behavior. Instead of following the way of ravenous animals who eagerly consume whatever is put before them, we make clear distinctions in echo of the Creator who, after all, formed the world with His own series of distinctions (between the waters above and the waters beneath, between dark and light, between earth and dry land, and so forth.)

Again, the Hebrew language offers unmistakable indications about the deeper meaning of our dietary traditions. The word most commonly used to designate any non-kosher food is *trayf*—meaning torn. This usage arises from one of the specific categories of forbidden meat, *trayfah*, designating an animal carcass that has been mauled by a wild beast and is therefore unsuitable for human consumption. Kosher food, on the other hand, is deemed a "proper" diet for human beings who wish to emphasize their differences from the animal kingdom.

This basic philosophical understanding of the dietary laws helps to explain their more arcane details. Pork is forbidden, for example, not because pigs are dirty and disgusting; goats have no more admirable habits, yet are perfectly kosher. The distinction between appropriate and inappropriate meat is clearly stated in the book of Leviticus: "Everything among the animals that has a split hoof...and which chews its cud, that one you may eat" (Leviticus 11:3).

We honor this distinction because it is God's commandment, and that alone is sufficient reason, but countless sages have attempted to understand what the Almighty seeks to teach us through this law. One intriguing speculation involves the relatively defenseless nature of beasts that fall within the split hooves/cud-chewing distinction: these animals will, perforce, lack the sharp, ripping teeth, the tearing claws, and hard, deadly hooves of species suited to battling for position in the food chain. In other words, these permitted beasts (and the relatively few birds not specifically banned) seem almost deliberately designed for human domestication.

Misunderstandings also abound concerning kosher slaughter. Some observers think its rules are outmoded because current technology affords new means of butchery that reduce the beasts' suffering even more than the humane provisions of Jewish tradition. But the overriding concern of kosher slaughter isn't the pain of the animal; it's the humanity of the slaughterer. Requiring a decisive, respectful killing—a single stroke with a sharpened blade—is the very opposite of *trayf*—the heedless tearing of a beast by a beast.

Some recent commentators have also muddied understanding of our tradition's insistence that meat and dairy products can never be enjoyed at the same meal. Based upon a phrase repeated three times in the Bible (Exodus 23:19; Exodus 34:26; and Deuteronomy 16:21) that commands us not to boil a kid in its mother's milk, this prohibition demands that we develop a greater sensitivity to distinctions between life and death. Milk is inescapably associated with new life, emerging from the body of a mother animal for the purpose of nourishing her own newborn young. Meat, however, is always dead flesh. Consuming the milk an animal's body has produced for its own young is the most intimate connection we can have with a beast. If, just as we enjoyed that closeness and that gift, we were also to consume the flesh of a slaughtered animal, we would be demonstrating a level of crudeness, greed, and beastliness that is the opposite of the refinement our tradition demands.

In addition to these philosophical satisfactions, the day-to-day practice of keeping kosher confers many practical benefits. First, it immediately makes your home a sanctuary of sorts. I began keeping a kosher home in Berkeley, California, in 1972—at a time and place when any rational person might well yearn to accentuate the difference between his private world and the insanity of his surroundings. The distinctive foods consumed and the different dishes used at a kosher table remind you, every time you sit down to eat, that the standards of the street do not apply within this house.

At the same time, the demands of keeping kosher force Jews to find one another—powerfully encouraging cooperation and a sense of community. One reason that Jewish peoplehood has proven so indestructible is that observant Jews are reminded of it several times each day. And the extra effort involved in selecting and preparing kosher food connects us not only to other Jews in the world today, but to all the generations that have gone before. While traveling in Dublin, Chattanooga, Mexico City, and elsewhere, I have been dragged unexpectedly into the kosher homes of strangers and treated like a long-lost relative.

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Jewish dietary traditions are at least as relevant today as in the past, as my daughter's encounter with a tempting chocolate bar reminded me. In a society increasingly dedicated to the pursuit of indiscriminate pleasure, isn't it obvious why a father might be grateful his six-year-old has the ability to say no? It seems to me a beautiful thing—not a neurotic distortion—that a little girl can cheerfully sacrifice the sweet taste of candy for the sake of a set of external standards. Today's children and adolescents suffer from many maladjustments, but rarely from an excess of self-discipline.

One can only hope (and pray) that the strength to forego chocolate at age 6 will lead to the ability to turn down drugs, sex, or other indulgences at age 16. True, the code of behavior Sarah learns at home will make her different from other young people—religious Jews are *supposed* to be different. What more valuable gift could I give my children than the capacity to resist the powerful adolescent instinct to go along with the crowd? Paying attention to the difference between kosher and *trayf*, proper and improper, is potent practice for focusing on the deeper demarcation between right and wrong.

In short, I'm proud of my Sarah—proud with a ferocity it is difficult to express—as I recall this one tiny incident and think of the way she honored parents, grandparents, and her people—even in the face of delicious temptation. She's only a young girl, but there's an unfashionable, but still useful word that can be applied to the trait she displayed. They used to call it character.

Critics who deride Jewish dietary laws as arbitrary, repressive, or irrelevant ignore the power of this everyday tradition to preserve our peoplehood and deepen our humanity.

Michael Medved, chief film critic of the New York Post, *hosts a daily radio talk show on KVI, Seattle. He is the author of seven non-fiction books, including* Hollywood vs. America *and the forthcoming* Saving Childhood.

The Return of the Latin Mass

by Kathleen Howley

I'm told that even atheists groaned when Pope Paul VI agreed in 1969 to replace the traditional Latin mass of the Catholic church with the New Order of Mass. Even non-believers felt that something beautiful passed from this earth when the last *Deo grátias* of the old mass faded from the world's cathedrals.

The Latin mass was transcendent. It was noble. It fired the human imagination. When accompanied by Gregorian chant, it seemed to give mortals a foretaste of something eternal.

That's what comes from more than 1,500 years of liturgical history. The traditional mass is the oldest continuous form of Christian worship. Over the years, various popes have fine-tuned it, but each of the modifications grew organically from the old.

That's not what happened after the close of the Second Vatican Council in 1965. Though council members originally envisioned making only minor changes, such as having the Scripture readings in vernacular languages, what they got was a new mass.

"Let those who like myself have known and sung a Latin-Gregorian High Mass remember it if they can.... The Roman Rite as we knew it no longer exists. It has been destroyed," boasted Rev. Joseph Gelineau, S.J., an influential liberal on the committee that wrote the new mass.

Today, young Catholics are beginning to discover their lost heritage. Pope John Paul II fueled the growth of the traditionalist movement with a 1988 apostolic letter calling for "wide and generous" availability of the old liturgy. Currently, about half of the 150 Catholic dioceses in America conduct at least one officially approved traditional Latin mass.

Last May, more than 16,000 young traditionalists from around the world gathered in France, with the blessing of the Pope, to walk the 70 miles between Notre Dame in Paris and Chartres Cathedral. They journeyed, as they have for the last 14 years, to show their love for the older form of the mass.

Also in May, a prominent Vatican official offered a traditional Latin mass at the high altar of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, with a welcoming address from Cardinal O'Connor and a standing-room-only crowd. Presumably the Cardinal noted the predominance of young families in the overflowing pews.

The fact is, liturgical innovation has been devastating for the Catholic Church. Before the changes began, about 75 percent of Catholics in the U.S. attended mass every Sunday. Today, the figure is barely 25 percent. In the past, Catholicism thrived during times of persecution and societal breakdown. In modern America that hasn't been the case.

I can attest firsthand that the folksiness of the modern liturgy can easily lead young people to dismiss Catholic teaching—I did for a decade. In a nihilist world, we don't need a mass that has been adapted to meet modern fashions. We need a mass that is *contra mundum*—at odds with the world.

Like all humans, we need a glimpse of nobility and mystery to inspire us to strive for spiritual perfection. Our elders attended the "mass of the ages" during their formative years. We got "folk" masses. They were given a better headstart.

Recently, a woman told me about the death of her father, who passed his last days in a nursing home. In his youth, he had served as an altar boy. "At the end, he couldn't recognize the members of his family," she noted. "But if you said any line from the old mass, he could give the response, instantly, in Latin."

Priest: *Introíbo ad altáre Dei.*
(I will go up unto the altar of God.)
Server: *Ad Deum qui laetíficat juventútem meam.*
(To God, who giveth joy to my youth.)

Kathleen Howley, a Boston-based freelance journalist, writes for the Boston Globe *and* Catholic World Report.

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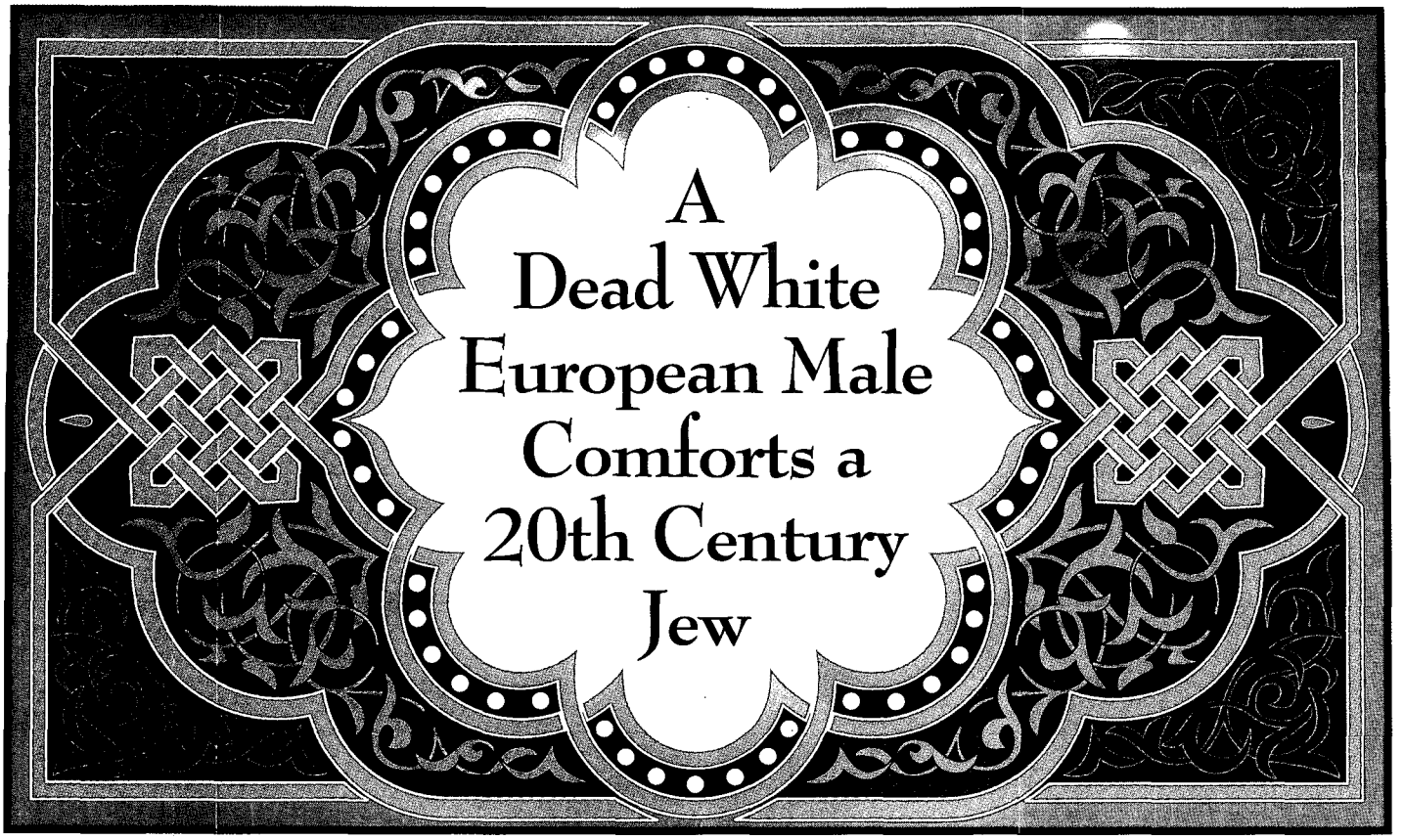

A Dead White European Male Comforts a 20th Century Jew

BY GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB

One of the most moving experiences in my teaching career occurred after a seminar discussion of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. A student came up to me to explain that she had missed the previous class because it was a Jewish holiday (a little-observed one, which I had quite forgotten), and she wanted to assure me that she had borrowed another student's copious notes. She also told me how much she valued the course and particularly how affected she had been by Burke's book, for it gave her, she said, a new appreciation of Judaism—of her Judaism, which was a rigorous form of Orthodoxy (so rigorous that she had had to get a special dispensation to attend a secular university).

I confess that I had never thought of Burke as an apologist for Judaism, nor of the *Reflections*, written in 1790, as having much bearing on present-day Orthodoxy. Indeed, some students had been disturbed by passages in the book referring to "money-jobbers, usurers, and Jews." But this student was not troubled by these lapses. What impressed her was Burke's defense of tradition and religion—and of religion as tradition. This is what spoke to her, as an Orthodox Jew, so directly and powerfully.

Tradition is, indeed, one of the main motifs of the *Reflections*, the crucial distinction, as Burke saw it, between the French Revolution of 1789 and the English "Glorious Revolution" of 1688. Where the French sought to create a society from scratch, based upon principles dictated by nature, reason, and right, the English tried to retain as much of the past as possible. The English revolutionaries, Burke said, wanted nothing more than "to preserve our antient indisputable laws and liberties, and that antient constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty." To ensure that the revolution itself would be "an inheritance from our forefathers," they sought precedents in "our histories, in our records, in our acts of parliament and journals of parliament," going back to that "antient charter" the Magna Carta, and beyond that to "the still more antient standing law of the kingdom." This, for Burke, was the "pedigree," the "patrimony," the "hereditary title," the "entailed inheritance" of English liberties.

The past served not only to validate the English revolution; it validated the future as well. "People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors." And the past itself was not fixed and immutable; on the contrary, it was the only security for change and reform. "The idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation and a sure principle of transmission, without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires."

The French revolutionaries, on the other hand, destroyed whatever of the past they could, including that most venerable of institutions, the church, and tried to subvert the most basic human impulse, religion. We know, Burke declared, that "man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against, not only our reason but our instincts; and that it cannot prevail long." If the French Revolution should succeed in subverting Christianity, he predicted, the void

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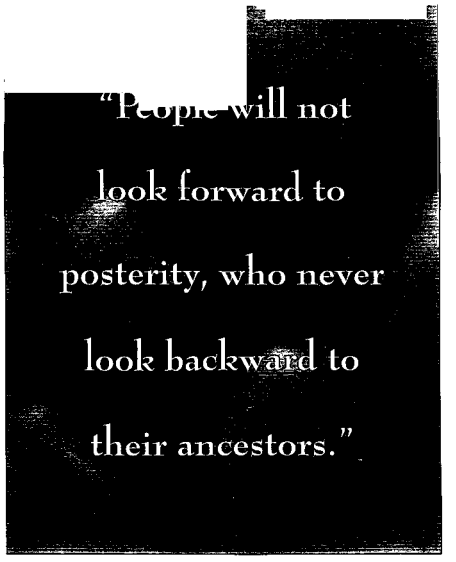
would be filled by "some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition." (This prediction was borne out three years later, with the inauguration of the "Worship of Reason" and the "Cult of the Supreme Being," complete with a new calendar, new festivals, and new saints.)

As religion is rooted in human nature, Burke reasoned, so the church is in human society. For the church represents "the rational and natural ties that connect the human understanding and affections to the divine" and that make up "that wonderful structure, Man." And the best kind of religious institution, he believed, was a church establishment that was part of the state and yet independent of it (by virtue of its independent property), thus consecrating church and state alike. This kind of establishment was especially important in a parliamentary regime, for it imbued free citizens with a "wholesome awe," reminding them that they were not entirely free, that they were only the "temporary possessors and life-renters" of the commonwealth, and that they were accountable to "the one great master, author and founder of society."

An established church, however, did not preclude the existence of other religions. Other religions, Burke explained, would be tolerated not as unbelievers tolerated them, out of neglect or contempt for all religions, but out of *respect* for them. The English "reverently and affectionately protect all religions, because they love and venerate the great principle upon which they all agree, and the great object to which they are all directed."

My student could have found a defense of her religion elsewhere, notably in her own religious texts and authorities. But Burke gave her a more universal, less parochial justification of her faith. Where Burke challenged an Enlightenment that, in the name of reason and freedom, threatened Christianity, she saw Jewish Orthodoxy being threatened, or at least demeaned, by the "enlightened" secular ideology of her own age. And where he defended the idea of an established, yet tolerant, church, she recognized just such an arrangement in her own dominantly Christian yet tolerant American society.

Most important was the role Burke attached to tradition, in religion as in society, that endeared him to my student.



Burke has been criticized for being overly deferential to tradition and insufficiently respectful of both reason and revelation. If this is so, it is less a problem for Jews than for Christians. No religion is as tradition-bound and history-centered as Judaism. And Orthodox Judaism is all the more so.

Of the 613 commandments prescribed for devout Jews, some are universal moral principles binding on all civilized human beings. But others are unique to Jews; they are what distinguish Jews from all other faiths and peoples. To non-observant Jews, some of these are arbitrary and irrational, relics of primitive customs and beliefs. For the Orthodox, they carry the moral weight of authority and tradition, having been decreed by revered rabbis (citing sources in the Bible that are not always precisely to the point) and having been observed by generations of ancestors.

Burke has also been criticized for having too utilitarian a view of religion, valuing it as an instrument of social cohesion and moral edification, rather than as a personally moving and elevating spiritual experience. For Judaism, however, the utility and the spirituality of religion are not in contradiction. The observance of the laws and the participation in the community of worshippers are so much a part of the faith that they enhance rather than diminish the religious experience. They are the lived realization of the transcendent order. The common failure to appreciate this, to find something spiritually demeaning or impoverishing in such an ethical, communal, "utilitarian" religion, is itself a product of the Enlightenment, which denied the need for any transcendent basis for morality or community.

Perhaps the most provocative, and profound, passage in the *Reflections* is the vindication of "prejudice" as a source of wisdom and virtue. "Prejudice" is Burke's shorthand for all those aspects of life—habit, custom, convention, tradition, and, not least, religion—which did not conform to the Enlightenment's view of reason. Prejudice in Burke's sense is not arbitrary or irrational. On the contrary, it has within it the "latent" wisdom and virtue that has accumulated over the ages:

> We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages. Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, and they seldom fail, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action...and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.

It took a bold and original mind, like Burke's, to make so radical a critique of the Enlightenment. And it took a brave and mature mind, like my student's, to see in that critique an explication and appreciation of her own faith—a religion that draws upon all the resources of its people and heritage to sanctify both wisdom and virtue.

Gertrude Himmelfarb is a member of AEI's Council of Academic Advisers. Her most recent book is The De-Moralization of Society: From Victorian Virtues to Modern Values.

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AMERICANS

The Last Western Traditionalists

BY MARK STEYN

"How do we keep our balance? That I can tell you in a word—tradition!"
—Tevye, in Fiddler on the Roof

What's the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* about? The opening number spells it out: "Tradition! Tradition!"

Fiddler is based on a handful of Sholom Aleichem stories about a dairyman in a Ukrainian *shtetl*. Interestingly enough, Aleichem's stories are not about tradition: When Aleichem's Tevye hears that his daughter has pledged herself to the penniless tailor, he's not bothered about the tradition of arranged marriages being broken, only that he's been left out of the deal. Sholom Aleichem, who grew up in the Ukraine, never gave tradition a thought. The tradition theme was invented for the Broadway stage version by an American librettist, and brilliantly musicalised by an American composer and lyricist. That was what *they* thought the story ought to be about.

Fiddler's opening number tells you a lot about American attitudes toward tradition. The so-called New World is, in many ways, more mindful of tradition than the Old. If you do come across tradition in ancient Europe, you often find that, as in *Fiddler*, it's there because of the Americans.

Take the telephone. A few years back, British Telecom, as part of its "exciting" "new" look, decided to remove the country's distinctive red telephone kiosks. Admittedly, the kiosks had one basic flaw, which their designer, Sir Gilbert Scott, had not foreseen: The British were wont to use them as public toilets. This tended to discourage long phone calls. Nonetheless, the announcement of their demise prompted a public outcry: That's to say, the British denounced the removal of their red kiosks for about ten minutes and then found somewhere else to urinate late at night.

BT sold off the red boxes to interested parties around the world. A few Hong Kong millionaires had them installed as showers. A shopping mall on Cape Cod snapped some up. Film producers acquired them for dropping into the background of scenes, thereby indicating to international audiences that this was somewhere in the United Kingdom.

Having abandoned one of the most instantly recognizable symbols of Britain, BT then installed U.S.-style street phones, although, displaying the usual British skill for aping the Americans to the point of caricature without ever getting it right, they installed them facing into the traffic, so that you couldn't hear a word. Instead of the British Crown, an "innovative design" firm came up with a new logo of a prancing ninny in red-and-blue striped underwear.

And then something curious happened. A year or two back, BT reintroduced red telephone boxes in Central London—*because the American tourists missed them.* They ripped out the new phones and replaced them with the old phones that they had ripped out to make way for the new phones. The boxes stand there now, down the Mall, round the back of the Palace, a rebuke to native feebleness: The British, it seems, now depend on Americans to maintain the traditions they lack the will to defend themselves.

American communications firms seem to have a better understanding of what constitutes a selling point with the public. Despite the upheavals of recent years, most American phone companies that have the right to do so still boast some form of the famous Bell logo. Directories even offer displays proudly illustrating the evolution of the bell symbol over the last century. Even on the cutting edge of the information superhighway, managers are at pains to emphasize continuity, to demonstrate to the public that they're the true heirs of Alexander Graham Bell.

What happened in Britain could only occur in a culture with a willful disregard for tradition. Had, say, Coca-Cola been British, they'd have gone to some trendy marketing gurus who'd have told them the first thing they'd have to do was get rid of that dumb looking bottle and the squiggly writing. That, incidentally, is one reason why there is no British Coca-Cola. (True, Coke did try a "New Coke" flavor; Americans shot it down and the company quickly relented.)

These aren't trivial examples. If the most vigorous forms of U.S. capitalism understand the value of tradition, that speaks well for American society. And it's reflected all the way down the line to a zillion smaller businesses. The old guy who came and drilled my well in New Hampshire a couple of years ago had his truck emblazoned: "Ed Green and his Water Machine. A North Country tradition since 1934." Visiting Britons love to mock the shingles proclaiming "Irv's Paving, Established 1978." "What's the point," they snigger, "of boasting that you were established 19 years ago?" The point is an obvious one: Irv is *aspiring* to tradition.

There's a superficial novelty in American life which is noisy and distracting, especially to Europeans who wander into New York coffee bars and order the Flavor of the Day (hazelnut-Eurasian-milfoil-cappucino). Yet, for all the rampant miscegenation of American capitalism ("It's the great taste of Rolaids—now in a pizza!"), the brash and vulgar Yanks are not, as the British like to sniff, crazed novelty junkies. When it comes to the important things, they're great traditionalists.

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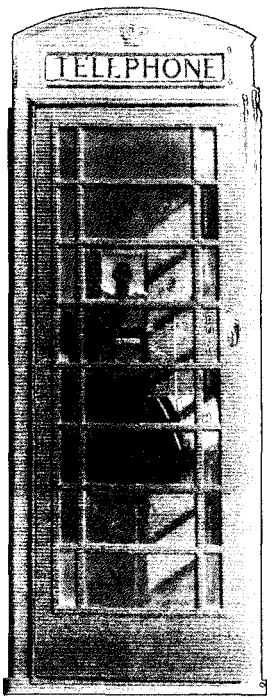
The deplorable constitutional tinkerings of today's American judges and politicians, for instance, are nothing compared to what goes on in Europe. Italy's entire constitution dates from the 1940s, Germany's and France's from the 1950s, Spain's, Portugal's, and Greece's from the 1970s; Belgium's latest doomed rewrite dates from circa a week ago last Tuesday and effectively divides the country into two nations which just happen to share the same monarch. Forget about Goethe, Beethoven, and sixth-century churches; in Western Europe, most of the mechanisms of the state go back not much further than the Partridge Family. In that fundamental sense, the New World is much older than the Old World. It's certainly more reverential of tradition: Even the experimentalists, like proponents of abortion and gay marriage, feel the need to seek constitutional legitimacy.

Europe's current governing elites tend to view tradition as something from which the masses have to be weaned. The disruption of tradition is, in this sense, a totalitarian act—the imposition of something which would not have occurred naturally. Just over 20 years ago, Sir Edward Heath, supposedly a Conservative Prime Minister, decided to "reorganize" Britain's ancient counties—an expression of local identity going back over a thousand years. Small counties like Westmorland and Rutland were abolished; large counties like Yorkshire were sliced into three or four pieces; medium-size counties like Herefordshire and Worcestershire were merged into unwieldy new ones; just for the hell of it, Shropshire had its name changed to "Salop"; by the time they got to Scotland, their creative juices were running out, so Stirlingshire wound up with the Stalinist moniker "Central Region." Thousands objected, but ineffectually. Now try to imagine a Washington apparatchik wandering up to some Texan and telling him, "We're going to slice off half your state, merge it with Oklahoma and rename it Southwest Region—purely for administrative convenience, you understand."



The New World is, surprisingly, more mindful of tradition than Europe.

Meanwhile, there isn't a single coin in the British currency which, in size, shape, or denomination, dates back more than 30 years: the 5p, 10p, 20p and £1 coins, as well as the £5, £10, and £20 notes, have all been introduced in the last 15 years. In America, we may wax nostalgic for the buffalo nickel, but the fact is, the coins and bills in our pockets have been mostly unchanged for generations. That's one reason for the dollar's soundness as a currency: You can get by with dollar bills in Uzbekistan or Rwanda because the natives recognize them; British pounds no longer look like pounds, only like the play money of any banana republic.

Britain's 1971 switch from pounds, shillings, and pence to a "decimal" currency was the first stage in the country's ongoing metrification. America is now the last major power to retain feet and gallons and bushels and pecks. Only a European could have concocted the metric system; instead of weights and measures which have their roots deep in human experience, some fellow in an office cooks up the thing and gets it imposed on the entire world. Britons had to get a special exemption from the European Union just to permit a temporary continuation of the right to enjoy drinking beer by the pint.

What happens when you live in a country where the symbols of nationhood, the physical landscape, and even your address can be torn up at whim? Inevitably, a sort of fatalism sets in, a kind or cultural vacuum which usually winds up being filled by dubious and ersatz tradition. I'm a big fan of the American Christmas, by which I mean the whole kaboodle: carols and pageants, but also Bing and Santa and Rudolph and poinsettias and "Happy Holidays." In Britain, somewhere along the way, Christmas died.

The British have two Christmas traditions these days: watching telly, and moaning about it. The dominance of the one-eyed monster is assumed to be unavoidable and, like all that is coarsest and most degrading in contemporary culture, American in origin. In fact, the electronic Yule is a strictly British invention. In Britain, Christmas attracts the biggest TV audiences of the year; in America, it attracts the smallest. No U.S. networks would bother getting into a blockbuster ratings battle between Sylvester Stallone's *Cliffhanger* and Tom Cruise's *Top Gun* on Christmas Eve, as Britain's two TV networks did—because they know no one would be around to watch. Around the 20th, the American networks shut up shop until the New Year, leaving a schedule of reruns and innocuous fillers for the handful of social misfits still watching.

To contrast the American and British Christmases is to appreciate the difference between a culture which is instinctively traditional and one which has, by bureaucratic fiat and public lethargy, been severed from its own roots. Ironically, the nostalgic imagery in British commercials today is often foreign—1950s U.S. diners, Greyhound buses, and so forth. When your society declares that your own past is worthless, it's a small step to latch on to somebody else's.

As the American century ends, we should pause to consider: ours has been the most continuously successful nation not just because it's the most inventive, but also because it's the most continuous. No Fifth Republics or Third Reichs here, only the same old federation the Founding Fathers had. The countries of Europe remake their governments every 20 years because they've been conspicuous failures. Consequently, they're obsessed with big ideas, the grand scheme. "Without our traditions," says Tevye, "our life would be as shaky as a fiddler on the roof!" But today's real rooftop fiddlers are the Europeans—fiddling here, rewriting this, abolishing that, until they wind up with the sort of wacky notions—Communism, Nazism, European Union—that can only take off in an anti-traditional culture where everything's up for grabs.

Americans should raise up their milfoil-flavored cappucinos and thank God for a country where novelty has a sense of proportion.

Media and arts critic Mark Steyn divides his time between the U.S., the U.K., and Canada.

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WHO'S AFRAID OF THE FUTURE?

Since no look backward to tradition would be complete without a glance forward as well, we conclude our feature section with this condensed version of a panel discussion on "The Future" that was recently held at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. The panelists included Virginia Postrel (editor of Reason*), James K. Glassman (DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fellow at AEI), Charles Murray (AEI's Bradley Fellow), and Christopher DeMuth (president of AEI).*

VIRGINIA POSTREL: I'm writing a book on the future in which I argue that the long-term cultural and intellectual trends shaping politics are different from the ones that we're used to. I think it's increasingly useful to think about a political, cultural, and intellectual landscape divided between stasis and dynamism.

What is stasis? Holding the present in place, maintaining a steady state, with the idea that this steady-state future will be directed by authorities who know best. The static side of the landscape is made up of two camps. The first is what I call reactionaries, whose central value is stability. They praise the good old days of big industrial unions, big Organization Man corporations, ethnic urban neighborhoods, farms everywhere, and so on.

Now, a lot of Americans feel bad that people have lost their jobs in steel mills or printing plants. But they don't really want to go back to a world in which we all drive giant 1970s clunker automobiles that consume a lot more steel, or in which we don't have computer technologies. So the reactionary viewpoint has a lot of intellectual heft these days, but it doesn't have much political heft. What do you do, then, if you want to put the brakes on the future?

You need the second party of stasis: technocrats. Their central value is not stability but control. They believe that the future will be determined by somebody, that it can't evolve spontaneously, or by decentralized experimentation, and that there's one best way.

There are all kinds of possible alliances in favor of stasis. For instance, if you don't like breast implants for environmentalist or feminist reasons, you can ally yourself with people who just want the FDA to have more power, and push lawsuits. The stasis coalition uses litigation, legislation, and regulation to force anyone who has a new idea to justify it in advance, rather than letting it be tested by trial and error.

But technocracy is intellectually dead and politically exhausted. Nobody really believes in the kind of problem-solving that we once associated with great technocratic initiatives. See, for example, Ira Magaziner's Clinton health care flop. Yet the technocratic approach has so dominated American politics for a hundred years that it's almost impossible for politicians and journalists to think about the future in any other way.

There *are* people who have a different attitude, and they make up the emerging, as yet unformed, "dynamic" coalition. The dynamic vision sees the future as an open-ended, evolving process that requires both *freedom*—because without it you have no trials—and *responsibility*—because otherwise you have no feedback that tells you when you make errors. The economist Friedrich von Hayek, thinking of the riot of trial and error that takes place in the biological world, called this "the party of life."

Dynamists see knowledge as flowing from the bottom up, through markets and other social institutions that adjust incrementally as people experiment, and as they gain new information. It emphasizes the importance of simple rules for a complex world (to use Richard Epstein's phrase), not complex regulations designed to try to keep the world simple.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN: On August 24, 1943, a distinguished panel of social scientists presented President Roo-

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sevelt with a report entitled, "Estimates of the Future Population of the United States," prepared for the National Resources Planning Board. The midrange estimates of these experts called for 151 million Americans in 1960. In fact, the U.S. population that year was 179 million, a gain almost two-and-a-half times greater than predicted. These distinguished experts also told President Roosevelt that our population would gain only 9 million more between 1960 and 1980. The actual rise was 48 million. Finally, these experts expected the 1990 population would be almost 168 million. It turned out to be 249 million—131 million more Americans than predicted.

I cite this example simply because population is a very important number for government planners to have. It affects everything: Social Security, the military, GDP, etc.

What did these planners miss? Among other things, the baby boom. They looked to the past for their estimates of the future. And why not? That, in general, is all we have to rely upon. But looking at the past produces horrendous mistakes of this sort over and over again.

One of my journalistic interests is finance, and I collect errors in financial prognostication. They are not hard to find. For instance, nearly all mutual funds are managed according to the fundamental idea that human beings can foretell which stocks will perform better than others, and yet in ten of the past 12 years, the Vanguard fund that simply invests in the stocks in the Standard & Poor's 500 index has beaten a majority of managed mutual funds.

The enemies of the future are those who insist that they can predict the future and adopt government policies accordingly. Why don't we know what the future holds? Because it's too complicated. There are just too many variables. You can't have a successful central planning agency because it can't know enough to make those decisions. The population experts I mentioned, for example, were about right on American life expectancy, but they were wrong about the family-size preferences of returning veterans.

There is understandable fear involved in an unknowable future, but there's also opportunity for imagination. How does a party of the future approach questions of public policy? By acknowledging that planning is just futile and wasteful. By encouraging experimentation, risk-taking, and venturing. We need to be able to try and fail, and try and fail, and try and fail, and eventually, try and succeed. The key is to just keep trying.

How do you do that? Through lower taxes on productivity and creativity, through taxes on consumption rather than on income and capital gains, and through regulations that encourage competition rather than restrict it. Above all, by devolving decisions to individuals.

Finally, government should err on the side of inaction. One factory's bad decision will only affect that company and its workers, but bad government decisions affect tens of millions.

CHARLES MURRAY: Human demands for security can be a major obstacle to limited government. At the time of the American Revolution, it was not an option to construct a government that promised security. In the twentieth century it is.

I can imagine being a New Dealer in 1933. In fact, I have a feeling that, had I been 25 years old then, I *would* have been a New Dealer, because it was difficult to foresee then the contradictions that would exist between providing security through the government and living a satisfying, productive life in a free society.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States was a poverty-stricken country by today's standards, and so was every other industrialized nation. And so the idea of using the state to redistribute wealth had going for it the fact that there was still a great scarcity of wealth, and arguably you couldn't rely on people to split it up fairly without the compulsion of the state.

But by the end of the twentieth century, we have become a great deal richer. As wealth continues to expand, it becomes harder and harder to believe that people would be starving in the streets without a coercive welfare state to redistribute wealth.

If you look 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years ahead, at the increases in wealth that we can expect, at some point it is going to become blatantly obvious that there is plenty of wealth to go around and that the state's involvement is not only unnecessary but counterproductive. And we have the chance, then, of getting out of the box that we are currently in.

It is possible, in the future, that the drive for security will lose a lot of its force—not because people will have less need for security than in the past, but because it will be so much more apparent that they don't need the state to ensure that security.

Simultaneously, all the benefits of living in a free society, of running your own life, of being responsible for your own life, will be more apparent. All kinds of developments in technology will make individual autonomy and self-governance of one's life more accessible, rather than less.

CHRISTOPHER DeMUTH: Let me play devil's advocate: Do we really believe that, in principle, government can never encourage norms that reflect the accumulation of historical experience?

Didn't government efforts to discourage smoking based on improved knowledge of the health consequences contribute to the decline in tobacco use since 1964?

Or what about price-fixing among businessmen? This was attacked by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations,* and courts recognized its undesirability by refusing to enforce price-fixing and market-division contracts. Eventually this grew in most nations into a legislative prohibition on price-fixing.

Aren't these plausible examples of government usefully enforcing norms based on human experience?

And is it necessarily undesirable to try and anticipate and influence the future? Look at international politics. Is it completely fruitless for people responsible for government policy to look at world experience in order to try and form future developments? Authors like Francis Fukuyama, Samuel Huntington, and Secretary of Defense Weinberger have written books in which they think through the kinds of calamities and wars that might draw us into action in the future, and therefore what our defense and foreign policy posture should be.

Is it futile to engage in such exercises? Can we know nothing from looking at our experiences? And is it really a matter of principle, or just case-by-case judgment about the effects of government rule-making, that leads us to say that government is not likely to be a good discoverer and enforcer of social norms for the future?

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WEBB *continued from page 49*

recommendations was to define combat vessels by type of ship. My view had always been that the biggest difficulty of female assimilation on ships is the length of deployment. Their recommendation surprised me, but the process was the right process, and so I accepted it. Now I think we need to look at it again.

TAE: Is it still possible to have a strong military and warrior tradition? Can Beavis and Butt Head be turned into Marines?

MR. WEBB: They always have been. No democracy can survive without two things, and we are in danger on both counts. One is a strong public education system, so that no matter where you start, you believe you have the opportunity to make something big of yourself. Second, you cannot have a true democracy if, in times of crisis, only some people are at risk. Every different part of the country, culturally, must be at risk if the nation is at risk. Unfortunately, that risk-sharing has fallen by the wayside since Vietnam. When I was in Vietnam, I thought we were all over there. Then after I was wounded and came back to work on Capitol Hill, I started calling around. I called Harvard and asked how many people graduated from Harvard College from 1962 to '72 and how many were killed in Vietnam. The answers were 12,595, and eight. They later said 12. In World War II, by contrast, Harvard lost 691 killed in action.

If you separate out the governing elites from the people who are vulnerable to public policy, you get problems. In order to understand the risks you are putting my nephews or my son through, you have to feel somewhat at risk yourself. Today for the first time that I know of, the government's entire national security team is composed of people who have never worn a uniform—from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the National Security Advisor. Not only that, but if you look at the people in the administration, who's got anyone personally at risk?

It's easy to say, send a few troops to Somalia. To Bosnia. Zaire. Rwanda. The order-givers have no comprehension. One culture pays while another culture moves things around. That's not the way this country is supposed to be.

TAE: *The Wall Street Journal* ran an article last year about Beavis and Butt Head-type kids going to Parris Island and coming out something so different that their own mothers couldn't recognize their sons. One of the interesting twists was that the sons were disgusted by their own former lives, their own former friends, by the society around them.

MR. WEBB: Yeah, that guy hates what he was, and he's not going back to it because he's risen above it. These guys have found a camaraderie that will sustain them for the rest of their lives. You don't get that sitting on the block.

It amazes me, the number of extremely successful former Marines. You go up on Wall Street and they're everywhere. These aren't always people who went to really good schools or who have incredible native talents. They've just learned how to be men.

As for the disdain for weakness in former buddies, it's always been that way. We used to talk about it when I was a Marine. If you think you feel alienated from somebody back on the block when you made a voluntary choice to go into the service and they are still just screwing around, think about how you feel when you went overseas and got your butt shot off and came back and they called you names.

But when you had conscription in place, you had shorter average enlistment periods, higher personnel turnover, and a lot more people with military experience going back into the community. So it was a lot easier to have camaraderie when you went home, because people there had been through it.

TAE: Not all traditions are good. During my time in the Air Force I noticed the tradition that you're not supposed to challenge authority. Because decisions are unchallenged from within, they sometimes go in the wrong direction.

MR. WEBB: Your experiences are probably a product either of poor leadership or of the end of conscription and the evolution of this professional military, which encourages less questioning than when we had a citizen military. The American military was founded on the right of the soldier to ask why. It drove von Steuben bananas at Valley Forge. He came from the Prussian experience. He kept saying, These Americans, they always want to know, "Why?"

TAE: You harshly criticized Admiral Boorda, the Chief of Naval Operations who recently committed suicide after making controversial decisions on Tailhook and gays and women in the military, and being investigated for wearing ribbons he hadn't earned. What do you make of the Boorda affair?

MR. WEBB: The military tradition is, you wear your ribbons right. I have never in my life seen a senior Marine with his ribbons on wrong. When I was Secretary of the Navy, I had to personally sign off on every transfer of an admiral. These packets would include an eight-by-ten picture of the individual, and I got in the habit of checking the ribbons they were wearing as one way to get to know who the admirals were. The ribbons are the roadmap of your career.

I never once questioned whether any individual deserved an award that he was wearing. What I was doing was looking at the correctness of how they were wearing their ribbons. When I first started this, a tremendous percentage of the admirals in the Navy were wearing their ribbons wrong. The problem is, if the admiral isn't wearing his ribbons right, then why should the petty officer care? I announced that I wasn't approving any transfer of any admiral whose ribbons came up to my office wrong. I don't have any regrets or apologies to make for the fact that I was attempting to enforce a tradition in the correct way.

For some time before the Boorda suicide, I had been criticizing Navy leaders for failing to adequately defend their service in the wake of Tailhook and so forth. My efforts were not directed purely at Admiral Boorda but at many senior leaders who had let the Navy's culture be wrenched by political manipulation. In a speech to the Naval Institute earlier in the year, I had warned against sacrificing military principle and loyalty to further one's personal career, and I criticized the way some great officers had been stigmatized and pushed out of the service for political reasons.

I was talking to all the admirals, not just Boorda. I was saying, Where are the senior officers who are supposed to step forward and defend their institution when it's being torn apart? When good men were railroaded without a shred of due process, who was speaking up? The number-one tradition in the military is loyalty from the top down: Take care of your people.

TAE: Speaking of the top, what do you think of Bill Clinton?

MR. WEBB: I cannot conjure up an ounce of respect for Bill Clinton when it comes to the military. Every time I see him salute a Marine, it infuriates me. I don't think Bill Clinton cares one iota about what happens in a military unit.

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BIRD'S EYE *continued from page 6*

they work, even *McGuffey's Readers* are still being sold in homeschooling catalogs. But those same catalogs—and this is my real point—are also packed with computer-based products. And the parent networks are often built on fax and e-mail. These are not, in other words, people who are allergic to technology or broadly hostile to modernity. In my experience, in fact, homeschoolers tend to be technological enthusiasts. They are simply selective in what they pick and choose from modern life, with their skepticism being especially finely tuned regarding cultural and moral innovations.

The point of this digression is simply to suggest that such people may end up being important in leading America out of today's anti-traditional wilderness. It may take a kind of traditionalist counterculture to show us how to reconcile all that is good and liberating about modern life with all that is great and essential about traditional life. It will not be Luddites who will lead us on this delicate peace-making exploration, but experienced wisemen and -women who will know the route simply because they fumbled with these questions themselves and finally figured out solutions. It will be people like Michael Medved and Kathleen Howley, who on pages 61-63 tell us how a TV/radio host and *Boston Globe* writer, respectively, became deeply attached to daily rituals that are medieval to ancient in their origins.

One reason I don't feel hopeless about the fate of tradition in this country is because restoration movements that aim to revive and extend all that is good about traditional practices are now arising. The argument over the value of the traditional family, for instance, has swung sharply in the direction of sanity in just the last half-dozen years, with much of the sneering disdain for "the Donna Reed lifestyle" being replaced by a soberer appreciation of what's lost when two-parent families decline.

Likewise, we see the seeds today of various character reform, back-to-basics, crime control, and civic-excellence programs that openly aspire to return us to earlier community standards. As we explained in our November/December issue, the frank aim of the most intelligent home builders and designers these days is literally to re-create pre-1940s-style towns.

Even on the Left, it's stunning to note that many of the most energetic reform movements are now "reactionary," aiming to bring us back to an earlier status quo. Environmentalists want to restore wolves and bears and bison on land where they traditionally roamed, and to re-create grasslands and marshes in places where they traditionally grew. Historic preservationists want to save old buildings. Mass transit enthusiasts want to restore city rail systems. As self-described "progressive" Charles Siegel acknowledges, "all these proposals are meant to undo some of the damage done by the twentieth century. They are 'trying to turn back the clock.'"

Of course, these ideas are wildly uneven. Some have merit, others have none. And obviously there continues to be lots of countervailing pressure, especially from the Left, in favor of throwing away everything old and sprinting as fast as possible away from tradition and toward that bridge to the twenty-first century. My only point here is that lots of Americans now have reservations about the rate at which we have been forgetting older ways. Many are beginning to recognize that our grandparents weren't idiots, that on questions like love, marriage, schooling, discipline, beauty, truth, and decency, many of our grandparents' rules are just as wise and fresh now as on the day they first got codified into a "thou shalt..." command.

As Americans become more cautious about the know-it-all arrogance of modernism, our next step will *not* be to simply and stupidly revive all things old. People who've driven a Nash Rambler don't really want to bring it back. Instead, our goal for tomorrow will be to bridge the gap between preserving and designing anew. That, of course, is exactly what tradition has always existed to help us with. Tradition has never been something frozen; it is more like a process for finding one's way into the future.

G.K. Chesterton's wondrous encapsulation of this subject was that tradition is "the democracy of the dead." The dead aren't the *only* ones with a vote under this schema. They can be over-ruled. But they have a place at the table. In this way, tradition becomes a kind of conveyor belt that transmits the memory and life's lessons of earlier people across the barrier of time.

It's important not to think of tradition, old things, and time-tested ideas as spinach that you must eat just because it's good for you. The good news is that there is usually pleasure and comfort to be had in partaking of tradition.

Why do people like old houses and historic towns? Because of their scant electrical systems, or the satisfying howl that comes from their drafty windows on a cold night? Hardly. People like old houses for their human workmanship and, even more, for their human *ghosts*. When you step onto the cupped stair tread of an old farm cottage or Victorian rambler you think of all the people who passed this way before you. You think of the children who slid on the banister before growing into old men, you imagine the radiant bride who may have descended those very stairs, to the measured sound of a fiddle, on the way to being joined to her husband in front of the fireplace. Most people find it comforting to recognize that they exist within a web of other human lives, unknown as well as known. A proper respect for tradition can lend life an extra dimension in this way.

I don't know much about Horace Shaw, the carpenter who in 1897 built and then lived in the house that I now occupy. But I do feel connected to him. Though he and I are Americans separated by more than three generations, we've shared some pretty intimate experiences. (Horace, I'd like to talk to you about that low ceiling at the top of the stairs.)

On page 36, Bill Kauffman quotes Ray Bradbury's line that "No person ever died that had a family." A couple of articles later, Jim Webb suggests that erecting a memorial for dead soldiers allows them to live forever, as "one small part of something so big and great that it'll never die." In a certain way, the 1897 carpenter of South Geneva Street is also still alive, in my mind, and the minds of my wife and children.

Tradition is an eternity machine. It transports the wisdom of the ages to us for our own benefit. And it offers an assurance to those of us lucky enough to be breathing and learning things today that we will still be alive tomorrow. And a generation from now. And even a hundred years into the future.

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Transcript

WORDS WORTH REPEATING

TAKING CITIZENSHIP SERIOUSLY

by John Fonte

Citizenship means full membership in the American republic. The goal of the naturalization process that grants citizenship to U.S. immigrants should therefore be Americanization, stated clearly without apology or embarrassment. Americanization does not mean giving up ethnic traditions, cuisine, and birth languages. Americanization means adopting American civic values and the American heritage as one's own. It means thinking of American history as "our" history, not "their" history.

Today's "multiculturalists" tell us that young Americans of Hispanic, African, and Asian descent could not possibly relate to dead white European males like Washington and Lincoln. That is false. Successive waves of different kinds of Europeans, and Asians, and Jews as well as Christians, have all successively learned and then adopted America's heritage and national traditions. There is no reason today's new arrivals can't do likewise, and patriotic assimilation demands it.

What is sometimes called "assimilation" often means only absorption of popular culture. This is not patriotic assimilation. Interest in American popular culture occurs everywhere in the world and has nothing to do with our civic values or political allegiance to the United States.

Under no circumstances should current naturalization requirements for immigrants be weakened. Rather, they should be strengthened, and more substantive questions on core American principles should be added. If our principal objective is to ensure newcomers can enjoy responsible and active citizenship in our liberal democracy, then we must take the tests seriously.

The current test requirements consist of two sets of 20 multiple choice questions (Where is the nation's capital? Who was the first President?) and two dictated English sentences (one of the most commonly used ones asks whether the American flag is red, white, and blue). Candidates are required to answer only one set of the questions and get 60 percent of them right. They are also supposed to "satisfactorily complete" at least one of the sentences (misspellings such as "Amerucan" are accepted). If a candidate fails, he can take the same basic test again.

There is overwhelming evidence that even these minimal requirements are not being enforced. Detailed reports in newspapers have revealed that naturalization requirements have recently been dumbed down and devalued.

For several years the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has subcontracted much of the testing process to outside advocacy organizations. According to INS officials, these organizations have often ignored English language requirements, given test answers in advance, and promoted cheating. Many of the groups that either administer the tests or work closely with the INS to establish the rules of naturalization are organizations that reject Americanization, promote multicultural separatism and cultural relativism, and work hard to obliterate all distinctions between citizens and non-citizens.

In addition, Mexico is advancing a "dual nationality" law under which Mexicans who have been naturalized as American citizens would retain their Mexican citizenship and the right to a Mexican passport. Mexican government officials have openly declared that they consider American citizens of Mexican descent as "our compatriots in the United States," requiring their special protection.

The United States should not recognize the validity of the dual nationality proposal by the Mexican government, because it is inconsistent with our concept of citizenship. Naturalization should continue to require the transfer of full political allegiance to the United States and the renunciation of all foreign allegiances. If Mexico tries to establish dual nationality, the U.S. should insist that our new citizens renounce Mexican nationality and give up their Mexican passports.

One of the most damaging trends over the past several decades has been the blurring of all distinctions between citizens and legal residents who are not citizens. One of the Clinton administration's top officials at the INS wrote a paper several years ago recommending that non-citizens be allowed to vote in local elections, and this has occurred in some localities. More recently, news accounts suggest that the administration rushed large numbers of immigrants through the naturalization process in 1996 so that they could be eligible to vote in the election. Citizenship is cheapened and devalued in these ways.

In addition to the political differences between citizens and non-citizens (the right to vote, hold office, be employed by certain branches of government, etc.), we should maintain other distinctions. The right to petition for relatives to immigrate to the United States, for example, should be reserved for American citizens. When it comes to forming public policy in our democracy, the voices of Americans should be given greater weight than the voices of residents who do not have the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

John Fonte is a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. This is adapted from testimony he delivered recently to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Immigration.

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In Real Life

THE DAILY WORK OF AMERICANS

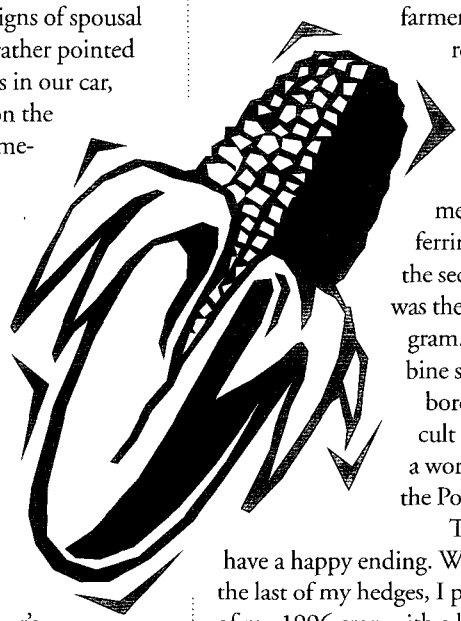
MEETING MY FUTURES

by Blake Hurst

Conservatives like free markets. I know I do. Mostly. But in all my time spent with Adam Smith, Milton Friedman, and Joseph Schumpeter, nobody mentioned how hard free markets can be on a marriage.

My Southern Baptist upbringing and the social constraints that come from being related to at least half of the people I see in a month's time have always protected me from most of the temptations that contribute to today's divorce rate. But then came my decision to take a "short" position in corn futures (betting that the price would go down) during the most explosive bull market in a generation. That could strain even the strongest union.

I exaggerate somewhat. My wife of 20 years never once questioned my marketing plan, and she showed almost saintly patience as the margin calls asking for money (as corn prices went up) came each and every day. The only open signs of spousal displeasure have been the rather pointed comments about the rattles in our car, which has 148,786 miles on the odometer. I'm sure that someone who spent last year on the *right* side of the corn market is driving my new Chevy Suburban, and I wish him a series of transmission and engine failures.



My plan was sound. The price of corn, the primary crop on our farm, was twice what it had been the summer before. So I sold not only this year's crop on the Board of Trade, but next year's crop as well. Unfortunately, I wasn't the only person who had figured out that corn was liable to be cheaper in the years to come, and when it came time to "roll my hedges," I had already been rolled.

I didn't go down alone. Article after article in the farm press recommended plans just like mine, and trading losses across the farm belt have totaled as much as $1 billion. At least one farmer committed suicide, and the *Wall Street Journal* carried an article about the devastating effect these losses have had on small communities across Iowa.

It has been no consolation that my overall bet on the direction of the market was correct. Corn dropped from $5.50 in the summer of 1996 to $2.50 today. I simply placed my hedges too early and didn't have the fortitude to hold them long enough.

There is a cautionary tale here. I have been a cheerleader for the end of farm subsidies. And I'm still convinced that, in the long run, agriculture is better off on her own. But now that farmers can no longer share their risks with the taxpayer, the trip down the learning curve is likely to be a bumpy ride. Think-tank farmers find it easy to recommend the use of the commodity markets, which are nothing more than a mechanism for transferring risk, to replace the security blanket that was the government program. But from a combine seat here in Westboro, it is more difficult than it seems from a word processor along the Potomac.

This story does have a happy ending. When I closed out the last of my hedges, I priced around half of my 1996 crop with a local elevator. The price today is more than a dollar lower than it was the day I made that sale. So, although I'm not in the market for a new Suburban, I may be able to swing a slightly used one, and save my marriage. And, although the normal reaction of farmers in trouble is a call for government assistance, those caught in this year's futures debacle have shown remarkable forbearance. Instead of returning to the bad old days by asking Uncle Sam to socialize the risk involved in farming, they're acting like any other American capitalist.

They're suing everybody in sight.

Blake Hurst writes regularly from Missouri.

IT TAKES A BODYGUARD

by Mary Eberstadt

Why is it that one enduring stereotype of the stay-at-home mother is that of a frantic, frustrated, bug-eyed halfwit? I know why. Let me introduce my three-year-old daughter Isabel.

Isabel is of course adorable—lovely and bright, healthy and sunny, a third child and therefore, at least in theory, a beneficiary of parental experience. She is also, let us understate at the outset, somewhat active. This is not just my own opinion, but one shared by her father, her brother and sister, her babysitter, the attendants in at least two local emergency rooms, and anyone who has ever seen her on a playground. Some time ago, as the realization began to dawn that our charming elf had metamorphosed into a human hurricane, I kept a partial log of her doings in a single month. I report that record now as an ironic counterpoint to the earnest national debate over who is responsible for rearing "our" children.

The month of June opened with Isabel running headlong into a swing occupied by an older child in full throttle; she was knocked out cold. The next day (fully recovered) she saw steam rising up from a pot of

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stew, jumped for it, and burned her cheek. The day after that we had a barbecue, during which Isabel, in less than one minute, squirted a full bottle of dishwashing liquid all over the kitchen floor, poured the remains of someone's beer on top of that, and mopped up the mess with my favorite hat.

Somewhere during those same weeks, she also: took off all her clothes at the local playground and acted on the call of nature. Did the same at a family picnic. Chewed two lipsticks and tried to eat face cream. Flushed a diaper down the toilet late one night and caused a flood on the second floor. Jammed a six-inch plastic spider with retractable legs up into the same appliance, a feat we only ascertained one plumber and $72 later. Have I mentioned that she also likes glass? Tally for the last week of June alone: one broken crystal goblet and one broken bowl. Of course she breaks eyeglasses too: two pairs of mine, two of her father's, and one of our babysitter's. But that record, to be fair, covers six months.

I recite all this not to explain why life with Isabel has produced more than the usual share of unreturned phone calls, unwritten reviews, or bad housekeeping, but to illustrate the plain truth that there is nothing more hazardous to peace of mind than being the parent of a young child. Look again at the adventures of Isabel and see how easily the outcome of any one of them could have been catastrophic. Vigilance over a creature like this must be non-stop. Even when physical safety is guaranteed, the business of civilizing the savage beast is a dawn-to-dusk conflagration of the wills.

Lots of us, especially those of us who are parents, would just as soon avoid these uncomfortable facts. This desire, natural in itself, has come to be writ large among affluent, self-conscious well-educated parents in particular. As a result, we are in the grip of a kind of a cultural denial about what children really are and how much they really require from their parents.

What forms does this cultural denial take? One is the idea that the kids are better off without us. Almost every public and private school in our vicinity now has extended care hours. For extra money, you can leave your child at many schools between 7 A.M. and 6:30 P.M.—in other words, for almost all his waking hours during the week. In addition, we hear frequent calls from educators to lengthen and curtail the summer vacation. Then there is the continuing pressure to sweep more and more children into "socialization" at ever-younger ages. A few months ago, the Carnegie Corporation advocated universal preschool for children beginning at age three—a call echoed by Hillary Clinton, who writes approvingly in her book *It Takes A Village* that "even before they reach the age of three, many [French children] are in full-day programs."

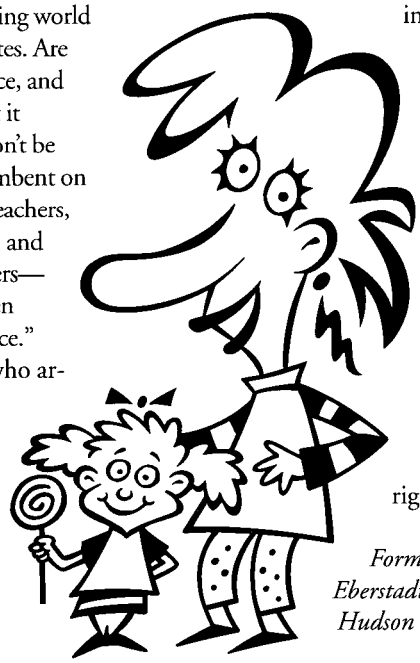
This same message also resounds through the expert literature on childrearing, where a preoccupation with adult freedom and convenience throbs just beneath the surface. Every time a study raises questions about the effects of day care on the very young, experts leap to argue day care's benefits, including the bonus that it is better for mothers not to be "stuck" at home. So day care is good, and full-time preschool even better. The long structured hours this forces on very young children are said to be enriching and useful in equipping them for everything from college to global competitiveness.

Enter Hillary Clinton's village. Are you worrying over whether to take that full-time job and leave the baby for much of the day? Take heart; it is "the village," rather than the torn individual, that "has a long way to go to accommodate diverse and changing roles both in the working world and at home," she writes. Are you considering divorce, and concerned about what it will do to the kids? Don't be frightened; "It is incumbent on the village—friends, teachers, mediators, counselors, and ministers, among others—to advocate for children during and after divorce."

There are critics who argue that the appeal of this message springs from parental selfishness and out-of-control materialism. It is an argument with some truth on its side. Certainly, it resonates with many who look around affluent neighborhoods today and see children who have just about everything, yet hardly ever see their parents at all.

But there is another reason we mortal parents wish to believe in the sufficiency of those other caregivers, those village people. For we mothers and fathers often wish to escape the terrifying job of being responsible for someone else day in, day out, for 18 or so years. We would like to believe that babies and toddlers are not abjectly helpless and demanding creatures. We hope that sensitivity training and "community service" can somehow compensate for our own failures of moral example. We desperately want to believe that nothing terrible will happen if we take our eyes off that four-year-old in the tree, or that 16-year-old during his first driving lesson. We have to think that if bad things do happen, there will always be someone else, somewhere else, who can fix, or at least be held responsible for, the result.

But resist it though we may, most of us there on the front lines know the rotten truth. Nobody else is going to walk the floors with your screaming baby at 2 A.M. Not a single one of those "friends, teachers, mediators, counselors, and ministers" that Hillary Clinton commends to you will be sitting awake in your bed the first night your teenager goes to a party. All our strenuous attempts to believe that there is such a thing as childrearing "expertise" are in the end just so much wishful thinking.



The tired old fact of the matter is that sometimes childrearing doesn't even take a brain. Much of the time, maybe even most of the time, it takes nothing more than a warm body in the right place at the right time—so long as it happens to be the right body. Or, depending on your child, the right bodyguard.

Former magazine editor Mary Eberstadt is an adjunct fellow at the Hudson Institute.

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EYEWITNESS TO CHEMICAL WAR IN THE GULF

by Brooks Tucker

The title of the article in the Sunday paper caught my eye: "Pentagon Says Troops Were Exposed to Chemicals in Gulf War." I smiled. The Defense Department was confirming what thousands of us Gulf War veterans have surmised for some time. As I read the article, I recalled a moment from February 1991 that is still very vivid in my mind.

Six months earlier, we Marines of the Sixth Regiment's First Battalion had been helicoptered into Saudi Arabia. Since then, we'd moved gradually north, on foot or in armored personnel carriers. During the day, we lived in a barren desertscape under skies darkened by oily clouds of smoke. At night, our sentries watched over a horizon glowing from hundreds of petroleum fires. We trained for battle throughout the scorching summer days when the mercury reached 125 degrees, and we continued to drill in winter's frosty nights. It was late February now, two months since we'd enjoyed our last shower or tasted a cooked meal.

Tomorrow, we would rise at 3 A.M. from our shallow holes in the coarse Arabian sand and clamber aboard our assault vehicles. Then, platoon by platoon, we would grind our way across the final kilometers of open desert towards the Iraqi minefields. We expected they would shell us with chemical artillery once we were in the "no man's land" between the first and second belt of mines; so we wriggled into our thick, charcoal-lined chemical protective suits. My platoon milled about in the dark, whispering nervously. A few stood silent around a tiny radio, straining to hear the BBC World Service report that the last-ditch peace talks had failed.

I rousted my squad leaders and climbed into the commander's hatch of our assault vehicle. The men crammed into the troop compartment behind me. The rear ramp whined as it closed shut, sealing them in a claustrophobic metal coffin bathed in pale red light. A cold rain had begun to fall, and it tapped on my Kevlar helmet. In my earphones the company commanders reported they were "Oscar Mike"—on the move. Along the western horizon, white streaks of flame whooshed upward from rocket launchers, and flashes of fire signaled the opening barrages of artillery. Hundreds of yards ahead, the combat engineers were positioning themselves at the edge of the first mine belt. They were preparing the explosive charges that would breach 12-foot-wide lanes through which we could pass. In a series of deafening explosions, they sent geysers of smoke and sand spewing into the air, and our vehicles began to creep forward.

Then I noticed the ground erupt in thin plumes of smoke a few hundred meters away. "Snowstorm, snowstorm!" said an emphatic voice over the battalion frequency. Incoming enemy artillery. More shells hit the soft sand to our front and flanks. I heard the distinctive sound of a round passing overhead, as if it were ripping the air apart like a cloth. The ground shook and our vehicle trembled. I felt my lungs deflate as the over-pressure sucked out oxygen. Another call over the radio, this one more urgent. It was from a company commander.

"Lightning, this is Nightstalker. Our lead vehicle hit a chemical mine and is disabled. Lane Red One is blocked. We are dismounting and moving the company forward on foot." Then, seconds later, another message, this one from our Fox chemical detection vehicle. "FLASH-FLASH-FLASH! Fox vehicle has detected possible nerve and blister agent in vicinity of Lane Red One."

The men in my troop compartment reflexively donned their gas masks in a matter of seconds. My stomach tightened as I listened to the frantic and distorted voices on the radio. The battalion commander calmly passed his guidance on to the commander who was now moving his company forward on foot.

I yelled to the men to relax and unmask. The threat was not yet imminent. There was no need to worry them any more than necessary. Our vehicle rocked forward slightly as another shell exploded a few meters behind us. The lane ahead was jammed with vehicles. I leaned out of the hatch to alert my driver and pointed to an anti-tank mine protruding from the edge of the lane, just a few inches from the vehicle's steel tread.

THE MEN IN MY TROOP COMPARTMENT DONNED THEIR GAS MASKS IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.

By now, the engineers had cleared lanes through the second belt of mines. Our traffic jam subsided and we began to make some headway. Overhead, a pair of Cobra attack helicopters circled a nearby bunker complex like hawks searching for prey. Their chain guns whined like buzz saws as they spewed bullets into the subterranean fortifications. Disheveled men waving dirty rags emerged from bunker after bunker, knelt in the soft sand, and raised their hands in surrender.

The following morning, the chemical alert posture was downgraded, and we were ordered to bury our chemical suits before pressing further north toward Kuwait City. I learned later from a fellow officer who was in the company that went in on foot that the chemical detection and monitor team had taken samples from the contaminated area and verified that the chemical was a nerve agent. The battalion and regimental combat logs contain records of the minefield incident and mention two other incidents when chemical alarms were sounded on the battlefield that day in February.

I suppose the reason the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency continue to deny that Iraqis used chemicals directly against U.S. forces is because any evidence to the contrary would compromise our longstanding national strategy of deterrence: We had threatened the Iraqis with nuclear retaliation if they used chemical weapons. But there is no doubt in my mind that our battalion encountered low levels of chemical agents during our three-day race to the outskirts of Kuwait City. And the government's persistent inability to disclose the details of these incidents leaves a bitter taste in my mouth.

Brooks Tucker served as an infantry officer in the Second Marine Division.

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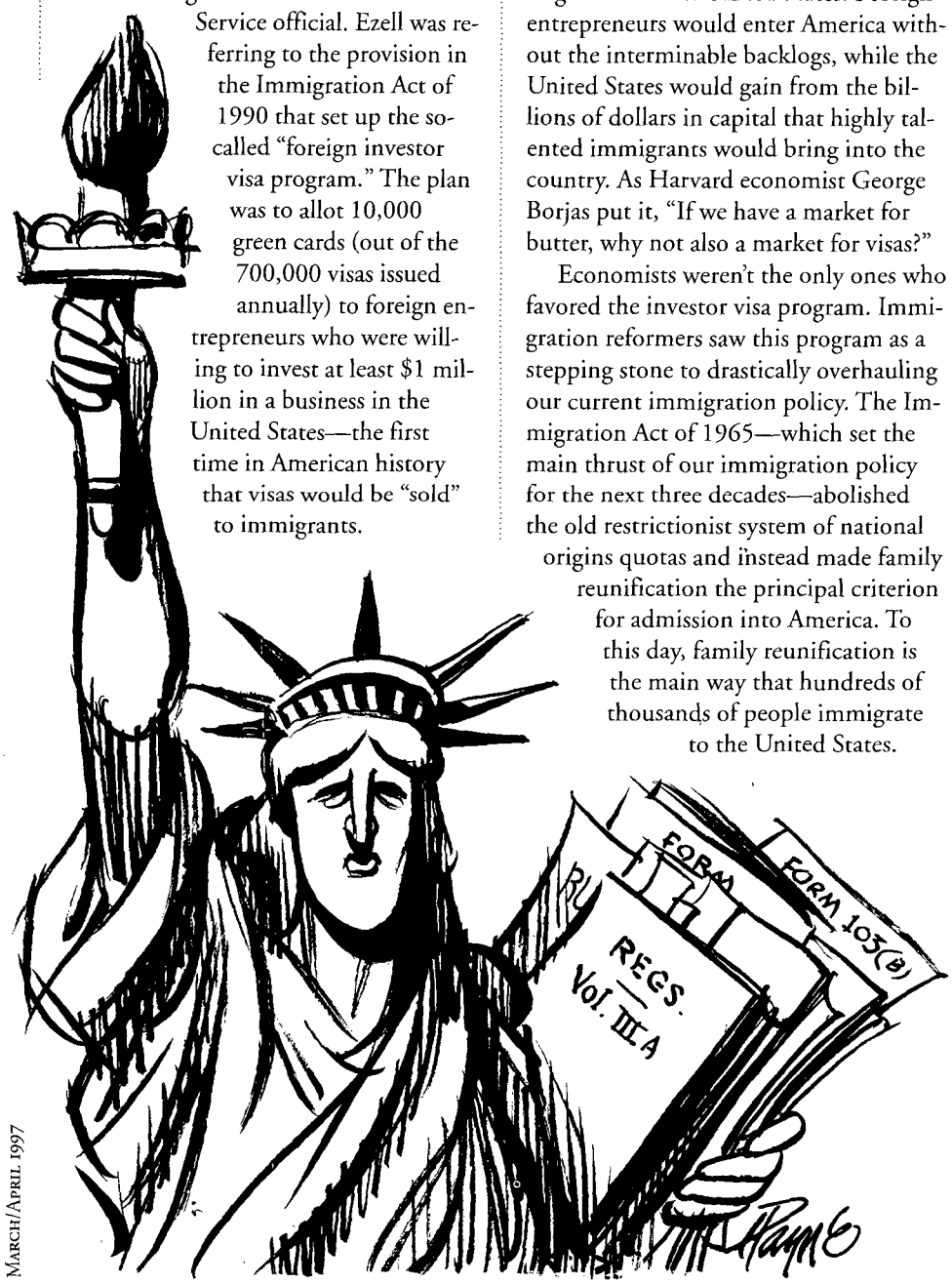
Let's Sell More U.S. Visas

by Kenneth Lee

"We've done great on boat people. I see no problem with a few yacht people," quipped Harold Ezell, an Immigration and Naturalization Service official. Ezell was referring to the provision in the Immigration Act of 1990 that set up the so-called "foreign investor visa program." The plan was to allot 10,000 green cards (out of the 700,000 visas issued annually) to foreign entrepreneurs who were willing to invest at least $1 million in a business in the United States—the first time in American history that visas would be "sold" to immigrants.



This idea of "selling" visas has long been championed by free-market economists as a good way to benefit both immigrants and the United States. Foreign entrepreneurs would enter America without the interminable backlogs, while the United States would gain from the billions of dollars in capital that highly talented immigrants would bring into the country. As Harvard economist George Borjas put it, "If we have a market for butter, why not also a market for visas?"

Economists weren't the only ones who favored the investor visa program. Immigration reformers saw this program as a stepping stone to drastically overhauling our current immigration policy. The Immigration Act of 1965—which set the main thrust of our immigration policy for the next three decades—abolished the old restrictionist system of national origins quotas and instead made family reunification the principal criterion for admission into America. To this day, family reunification is the main way that hundreds of thousands of people immigrate to the United States.

The booming economy of the '60s had allowed policy-makers to largely ignore economic considerations and instead focus on such humanitarian concerns as family reunification. But after three decades, it has become painfully clear that the 1965 act had the unintended consequence of admitting less educated and less talented immigrants. Of course, many recent immigrants are well-educated people who have had tremendous success in both business and academia. Many of the top high-tech companies in the country today, including AST Computer and Sun Microsystems, were founded by immigrants.

Unfortunately, the aggregate picture of today's immigrants is not as sanguine. For example, in 1970, recent immigrants had 0.4 fewer years of education than native-born Americans. Today's immigrants, in contrast, have 1.3 fewer years than natives. And newer immigrants are likelier to go on the public dole: The percentage of immigrant households on welfare spiked up from 5.9 percent in 1970 to 9.1 percent in 1990.

The investor visa program, despite its small and modest scope, was a radical departure from the 1965 act. It made capital and entrepreneurial talent, not family connection, the main basis for admission. Many reformers hoped that if this program were successful, it would pave the way for other criteria—such as educational background, occupation, talent, and English-language proficiency—to be emphasized when selecting immigrants. As Ben Wattenberg, an immigration enthusiast, argued in *The First Universal Nation*, the United States should adopt a system of "designer immigration" that would emphasize skills over family reunification. Countries like Australia and

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New Zealand already have such "designer immigration."

Although some legislators passionately opposed this idea as inegalitarian, the program was quickly passed with high expectations. Some congressmen even suggested that the program could attract up to $4 billion in capital and create 40,000 jobs a year. Expecting a deluge of applications, Congress set an annual cap at 10,000 investor visas, but five years after its implementation, the investor program has proved an abject failure. In its first year, a paltry 59 visas were granted, and demand has not increased appreciably since then. Last year, only 540 entrepreneurs immigrated to the United States.

What went wrong? Some critics have gleefully pointed to the failure as a refutation of the free market and used it to justify our current immigration policy. There can't be a market for immigrants the way there is for butter, they argue. Other critics have eagerly claimed that the failure indicates America's economic decline in the world. "It's kind of a sad comment on America," one immigration lawyer told the *Los Angeles Times*. "Pitiful. Pitiful. People used to kill for a visa; now they're saying, 'forget it.'"

In reality, this affair is a sad commentary on bureaucratic inefficiency and muddled government regulation. The program failed primarily because of the onerous paperwork and Byzantine rules it involved. "The most talented people in the world still want to come to the United States, but [the immigration process] is incredibly bureaucratic and burdensome," says Stephen Moore of the Cato Institute. "If we streamline our immigration process, we probably can create dozens of more Silicon Valleys."

Before the Immigration and Naturalization Service can issue a visa, investors must collect and disclose relevant financial records: tax returns, stock purchase agreements, certified financial reports, business licenses, payroll records, foreign business registration records, etc. Investors also have to prove that the capital used in establishing the new enterprise was acquired by legitimate and legal means—a task easier said than done. Compiling these financial records and completing INS's notoriously cryptic forms can be a time-consuming process. After spending months collecting these data, investors often have to wait as long as a year for the INS to officially issue the visa. This year-long wait may seem trifling compared to the 12 years that many immigrants have to wait, but it is nevertheless long for entrepreneurs we should be eagerly welcoming. "The regulations and paperwork are so complex and cumbersome that few investors have applied for investor visas," grouses one immigration lawyer.

After the entrepreneur receives the visa, he must then follow strict regulations. First, the entrepreneur must invest at least $1 million in a commercial enterprise and be involved in the business on a day-to-day basis. But it can't be just any form of investment; passive financing is strictly forbidden. Furthermore, the business must also hire at least ten full-time workers who work a minimum of 35 hours a week. Independent contractors, however, do not qualify as employees. Thus, an investor cannot invest in a capital project such as an apartment complex because contractors are not considered employees. Then the INS requires investors to prove that their businesses "benefit the U.S. economy," a nebulous guideline that requires investors to garner testimonials from local government officials, regional development agencies, and chambers of commerce.

The most powerful deterrent for entrepreneurs has been the inordinate risks involved in the investor visa program. Investors receive conditional two-year visas before they are awarded permanent green cards. To "earn" permanent green cards they must prove at the end of two years that they invested $1 million, hired at least ten employees, and adhered to a host of other requirements. This requires yet another round of paperwork: tax records, I-9 forms, and miscellaneous documents for each employee. These rules must be strictly followed. If the investor, for example, employed only nine workers instead of ten, he would be denied a permanent visa and possibly deported. It doesn't matter if the entrepreneur acted in good faith, only to be thwarted by a recession.

In one egregious case, a husband-and-wife team had poured over $1 million into two gift shops in California, according to INS documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. For two years, this immigrant couple assiduously labored to keep their business profitable and created over ten jobs for Americans. They had seemingly followed all the regulations established by the INS, but their request for permanent visas was rejected. Why? Their business was established as a joint partnership, and thus the INS ruled that they had to invest $2 million, not just $1 million. Had the husband or the wife listed his or her spouse as a dependent, instead of as a co-owner, the INS would have granted them permanent green cards. All that capital and two years of the investors' lives were thrown away because of simple carelessness in filing paperwork. And the American workers employed by the immigrant couple were possibly left without jobs. "Between the incredible amount of paperwork required by law and the INS's niggling bureaucratic demands, it's no surprise why so few people have immigrated as investors," explains Robert Baizer, an Oakland-based immigration attorney.

As a result, many wealthy entrepreneurs, especially those fleeing from Hong Kong before it reverts to Communist control, have flocked to Canada and other countries with less onerous regulations. Canada's investor visa program, for example, asks foreign entrepreneurs to invest only $270,000 and has minimal regulations. By making its investor program simple and accessible, our northern neighbor has attracted these valuable and talented immigrants. "Our investor program is so complex that the only way it will succeed is if we adopt tax incentives or some other incentives," says Elissa McGovern of the American Immigration Lawyers' Association. "We need to become more competitive with other countries."

Kenneth Lee is editor of the Cornell Review.

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the Consumer Economist

The Battle Over Correcting the Consumer Price Index

by David Reiffen

A recent *Washington Post* article opened my eyes to how some journalists view us economists. The story was about a poll the *Post* had conducted among, first, a group of economists and, then, a group of ordinary citizens. The survey featured questions on economic issues of the day, like "are inflated salaries for corporate executives a problem for the economy?" and "does free trade cost U.S. jobs?"

Despite their reputation as "dismal scientists," the economists were much more upbeat about national affairs than average citizens. How did the article interpret this? *It suggested that economists are out of step with reality.* I found this conclusion strange. If a big chunk of the population thinks AIDS is readily transmitted by handshakes, are physicians out of touch for believing otherwise?

Media skepticism toward the professional opinions of economists was certainly in full evidence recently when the Congressional advisory panel on the accuracy of the Consumer Price Index, or CPI, issued its report after a year of investigation. The panel's highly distinguished economists concluded that our government-calculated CPI overstates the true change in our cost of living by a lot. This is not news to economists; it has been a staple of economic textbooks for three decades.

There are several reasons the CPI overstates inflation. One is that the index calculates the change in a consumer's cost of buying a fixed bundle of goods, rather than the change in the cost of buying whatever bundle makes the consumer equally well-off. When the price of one thing goes up, consumers often switch to something else comparable (buying apples when oranges get expensive, e.g.). Today's CPI cannot capture that.

Overstatement also occurs because the CPI doesn't do a good job of capturing the increased quality of many goods over time. The panel illustrated this with the example of personal computers. The speed and computational ability of a computer currently priced at $1,500 is many times greater than a computer that sold for $1,500 in 1986. Hence, the real price of computing has fallen dramatically. The CPI, however, would tell us that there has been no change in the cost of computers.

Some commentators have questioned the relevance of the CPI panel's conclusions. In a commentary on National Public Radio, Kevin Phillips cited a poll showing that Americans "believe" prices went up 5 percent last year (the official CPI showed a change of 2.9 percent). Phillips reasoned that ordinary Americans are buying "parking and cups of coffee," and the increased quality of computers is irrelevant to their lives.

Even if that were true, the fact is, the same kind of quality increases occurred in lots of other products purchased by ordinary Americans. Does Phillips really believe the improvements in automobile quality of the past 20 years in terms of safety, durability, fuel efficiency and so forth have no relevance to families? Perhaps he should be given a new 1975 AMC Gremlin to drive for a while.

Quality improvements in consumer electronics—to cite another example—have been nothing short of phenomenal. New products have replaced less reliable or pleasing technology (e.g., CD players for turntables). Televisions have sharper pictures and last longer. I recently compared the "low price" stereo receivers analyzed by *Consumers Reports* last year and 21 years ago. The more recent receivers cost much less in constant dollars, yet had far better features, such as digital tuning, programmable station buttons, that were not available on even the most costly receivers in 1975. One highly objective measure of a receiver is its power per channel. The 1975 *Consumer Reports* "Best Buy" low-price receiver delivered 17 watts of power at 8 ohms resistance, while one of the 1996 "Best Buy" in the same category was much cheaper and delivered 110 watts. That is a six-fold improvement.

If economists have long recognized that today's CPI overstates changes in the cost of living, why now the intense policy debate over fixing the index? Changing the way the CPI is calculated would slow the growth of entitlement payments like Social Security that are tied to the index. Some clearly view this change as desirable while others view it as undesirable. However, the economic logic of the panel's conclusion is unassailable. If certain commentators consider it desirable that entitlement payments should continue to increase faster than the true rate of inflation, they should state that explicitly, and not blur the distinction between a policy goal, and its means of implementation. They should not pursue their agenda by disingenuously undercutting good research findings which show that our current inflation measure gets reality wrong.

David Reiffen, who received his Ph.D. in economics from UCLA, is a government economist in Washington, D.C., and the author of numerous professional articles in economics, law, and public policy.

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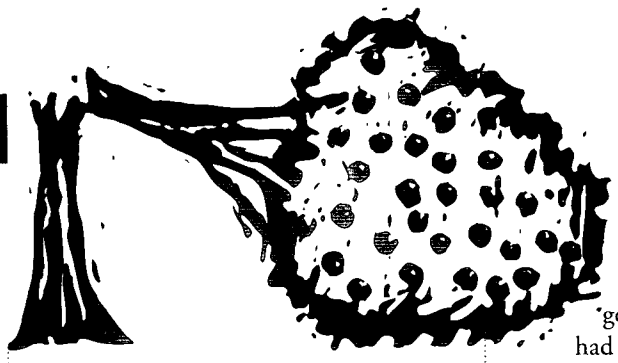
Flashback

To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to remain ever a child—*Cicero*

The Old-Fashioned Three-Day Weekend



When tradition faces off against the almighty buck, smart money will always go with the buck. Consider one of the overlooked revolutions of our generation: the Uniform Holiday Act of 1968, which provided that beginning in 1971, Memorial Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, and Washington's Birthday (later demoted to the beloved "Presidents' Day") were to fall only on Mondays. Poor George's holiday was trumped by the bill that bears his likeness.

For years, Florida Senator George A. Smathers, best known as JFK's sidekick in the pursuit of venereal happiness, crusaded for the three-day weekend. The eminently practical Smathers even wanted to junk Thanksgiving Thursday and transplant the Fourth of July.

The Monday holiday bill found its weightiest ally in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The chamber's arguments for uprooting the old holidays were no more elevated than the bottom line:

- It would reduce absenteeism—no more calling in sick on Friday after a Memorial Day Thursday.
- Production would not experience mid-week disruptions.
- Travel-dependent industries would prosper.

When the bill came to the House floor in May 1968, shrewd supporters had tacked on a provision establishing Columbus Day as a national holilday. This ensured the measure's passage, despite the futile effort of Rep. Edward Derwinski (R-Ill.) to rename Columbus Day "Discoverers of America Day" as a way to also honor a Polish explorer and "put an end to the Polish jokes which have swept the country." (Lech Walesa eventually did that.)

The Daughters of the American Revolution "vigorously protest[ed] this downgrading of our national heroes," but the white-haired bluebloods were no match for Chamber of Commerce greenbacks. Neither was the ramshackle Lord's Day Alliance, whose director complained, "Most ministers like long holidays about as much as they do the devil. The choir, ushers, Sunday school teachers, and the whole congregation join the mass exodus."

Congressman Robert McClory (R-Ill.), who co-managed the bill on the floor, gamely conjectured that families would spend the long weekends visiting Arlington National Cemetery, Gettysburg, and other "famed battlegrounds and monuments," including, presumably, the Tomb of the Unknown Shopper.

New York Democrat Samuel Stratton, self-proclaimed "father of Monday-holiday legislation" (but no friend to the Father of our Country) declared that three-day weekends would "refresh and restore the spirits and the energies" of federal employees.

The bill's cantakerous opponents were not impressed. Michigan Republican Edward Hutchinson called it "a rejection of our historic past"; North Carolina Democrat Basil Whitener grumbled that "a few business organizations would make more profit on Mondays" at the expense of "the tradition and background of our Nation.... Let us not peg everything to the dollar."

Rep. Joe Waggoner (D-La.) thundered, "Holidays and commemorative events were not created for the purpose of trade or commerce." The intrepid Waggoner, whose district must have had mighty few Knights of Columbus, even took aim at Mr. 1492: "I think it needs to be said since we seem to be so proud of Columbus, that when he left for this country he did not know where he was going, and when he got here, he did not know where he was, and when he got back, he did not know where he had been."

The traditionalists had a monopoly on wit. Fletcher Thompson (R-Ga.) offered an amendment to rename our holidays "Uniform Holiday No. 1, Uniform Holiday No. 2," etc. The immortal skinflint H.R. Gross (R-Ia.), who had opposed spending government money to keep the eternal flame over JFK's grave, proposed to move Christmas and New Year's Day to Monday. The Mondaynes were not amused.

The Uniform Holiday Act of 1968 passed the House, 212-83, and the Senate by voice vote, without debate. "This is the greatest thing that has happened to the travel industry since the invention of the automobile," rejoiced the president of the National Association of Travel Organizations.

Rep. Dan Kuykendall (R-Tenn.) saw it differently: "If we do this, 10 years from now our schoolchildren will not know what February 22 means. They will not know or care when George Washington was born. They will know that in the middle of February they will have a three-day weekend for some reason. This will come."

This has come.

—*Bill Kauffman*

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BookTalk

DESTINATION MARS

By Frederick Turner

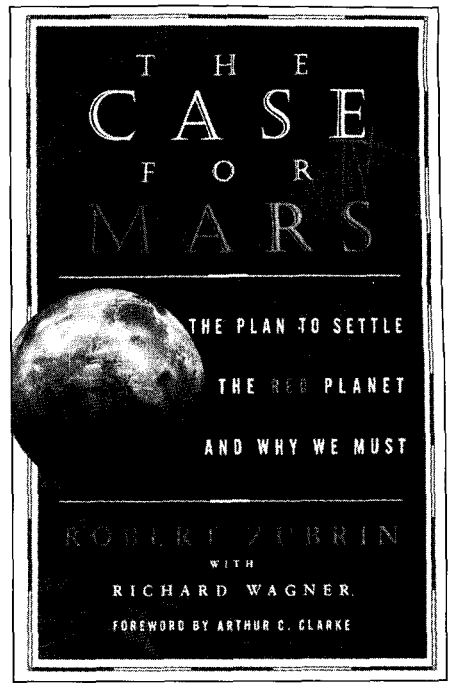
The Case for Mars
By Robert Zubrin with Richard Wagner;
The Free Press, 250 pages, $25

The recent discovery that life probably existed on Mars holds a number of stunning implications. One is that life may be common in the universe—that wide green planets, their plains and hills and oceans teeming with activity, may lie waiting for us under the light of alien suns. Another, scarcely whispered yet, is that since Mars' climate and geology seem to have started evolving more quickly than Earth's, the germs of Earthly life may have originated *on Mars* and been carried to our planet inside a meteorite, as the dead fossils were. Thus we would all turn out to be Martians, and to go to Mars would be to go home. A third implication—and this contains profound moral and economic significance—is that if life once existed on Mars, it could again, and we might earn for our generation the eternal fame of having brought a dead planet back to life.

With admirable clarity, *The Case for Mars* lays out a workable plan for sending a cheap and relatively safe expedition to the surface of that planet and establishing permanent settlements there. Depending upon our actions, this will be seen either as one of our civilization's rallying points after the moral exhaustion of the Cold War and the collapse of socialism, a moment when we dedicated ourselves to a task worthy of a democratic nation, or as a bitter sign that we had abandoned the glory road of the human spirit.

Robert Zubrin is a true engineering genius, like the heroic engineers of the past: Telford, Corliss, Piccard, Carnot, Eiffel, Steinmetz, Diesel, Brunel. But unlike them, he is alive and working on the private side of the space industry at what must be for him a frustrating time. NASA's 1989 Space Exploration Initiative, advocated by George Bush and overseen by Vice President Quayle (whose much-ridiculed remark about life on Mars may not have been as silly as it sounded), would have cost $450 billion; it died a fitting death on the budget-cutting table. It was essentially a way for big technology companies to get the government to pay for fancy borderline research and hire huge staffs of salary-boosting subordinates. Zubrin's plan has the supreme elegance of all great ideas, and its elegance shows in its price tag: a mere $30 to $60 billion spread over a decade. Its technology is not state-of-the-art. Indeed, Zubrin delights in pointing out how the basic chemical processes he proposes to use were invented by bewhiskered nineteenth-century Germans and used in Victorian factories, and how he and his colleagues created a demonstration project on Mars refueling, working with mail-order components and a budget less than the cost of a luxury automobile.

Essentially he proposes to refuel on Mars (the second safest place in the solar system, as he rightly calls it) *before* the explorers even leave Earth. Two years before the human crew takes off, a robot base lands on Mars, carrying a small payload of hydrogen, a power plant, life support systems, a pressurized light truck for transportation, a habitation for human beings, and a vehicle to return the astronauts to Earth. Mars' carbon dioxide atmosphere is sucked into a childishly simple chemical device, and reacted with the hydrogen



to make methane (a potent rocket fuel) and water. Some of the water is kept for the future dwellers' uses; the rest is broken down into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen is recycled back into the fuel-creating system, and the oxygen is stored as the oxidant for the methane and as the breathable atmosphere of the habitation. Zubrin, in other words, has found a way to use the miracle element carbon in the way that life all over Earth uses it, as the essential lever to tweak other elements into doing what one wants.

When the base, with a theoretically unlimited life-support capacity, is ready, the crew, together with a second complete habitation, a return vehicle, a truck, and a refueling system, land on Mars. Crew members will be able to spend several months there in relative comfort, protected from space radiation by Mars' atmosphere, and to explore the surface and prepare for the next group. Zubrin's plans for the further settlement of Mars are equally elegant. Mars' climate, he shows, is ready to be nudged by modest human efforts into a runaway greenhouse effect, giving the planet a warm thick atmosphere, water running on the surface, and all the ingredients for flourishing bacteria and plants.

Zubrin's economic ingenuity is no less remarkable. He proposes that the nation offer money prizes to the first private corporations achieving the technological goals that will add up to a successful Mars expedition. This idea neatly relieves the

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government of liability, bypasses the bureaucracy, rewards companies for saving money, not spending it, and invokes the creative genie of competition.

Can we muster the courage and vision to take up Zubrin's challenge? The Cold War and the nuclear threat got us into the habit of timorously cowering at the prospect of any great action. This is the most cowardly period in world history. Our brave youth, without a grand vision to provide national dignity, are reduced to gang wars and political whining, their human capacity for self-sacrifice wasted on issues of "lifestyle." Get a grip, America. Put Robert Zubrin in charge.

The poet Frederick Turner has been advocating Mars exploration for many years. His epic poem, Genesis, *describes the future terraforming of the red planet.*

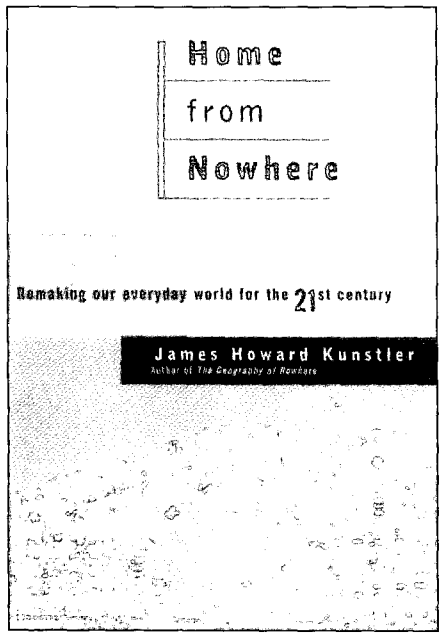
UP ON MAIN STREET

By Philip Langdon

Home From Nowhere: Remaking Our Everyday World for the 21st Century
By James Howard Kunstler;
Simon & Schuster, 319 pages, $24

When I opened James Howard Kunstler's first nonfiction book four years ago, the irascible, bombastic tone of his descriptions immediately put me off. About the time that I got to his fulmination against Long Island houses with their look of "slackjawed cretinism," I made a final grimace, put *The Geography of Nowhere* back on the bookstore shelf, and told myself this isn't writing, this is ranting.

But something has happened to Kunstler, and I think I understand what it is. *The Geography of Nowhere*—despite its shrillness, or perhaps because of it—put him on the map as a national commentator. It brought him invitations to speak, opportunities to see more of the country, chances to talk at length with critics of conventional development, and, best of all, the impetus to take his sandpaper-coarse sarcasm and refine it into language more consistently on target. Last spring the tightly wound free-lance writer from Saratoga Springs, N.Y., announced to an anti-sprawl conference in Connecticut that his aim is to revive the art of rhetoric, and I watched as he proceeded, for 60 riveting minutes, to regale his audience with a passionate attack on everything that is making America an uglier, less civic-minded society. The formidable skill Kunstler has developed on the lecture circuit has given him, in *Home From Nowhere*, an expressive power that's hard to surpass. This is one of those rare cases in which the sequel outshines the original.



The new volume presents a first-rate analysis of the built environment and how it contributes to the despoliation of American culture. Kunstler ties together many aspects of the "clownishness" in current society—the goofy way that people dress, the throwaway buildings we erect, the shallowness of much of our public discourse—and indicts the present state of our civilization.

Dignified architecture plays a cardinal role in any self-respecting civilization, and Kunstler argues that in recent decades the preponderance of American buildings (reflecting the low standards of their owners, developers, and designers) have behaved as if they had been relieved of all responsibilities for promoting the common good. He emphasizes the importance of public settings. "It matters," says Kunstler, "that the junior high school looks like a fertilizer factory, that the town hall looks like a wholesale beverage warehouse, that the library looks like a shipping container, and that a hotel looks like a medium security prison...these buildings dishonor the public realm as they dishonor their institutional roles in our lives, and in their design they make civic life impossible."

It is not simply that buildings should adopt more appropriate styles and materials. It is that buildings need to be arranged in such a way that they create places where people of different classes, backgrounds, and walks of life feel comfortable coming together, subject to the norms that support civilized give-and-take. In this regard, Kunstler praises the traditions that prevailed until about 1945—the uncomplicated traditions, for instance, that gave us Main Street, a public arena in which anyone who conducted himself with due regard for others was welcome to participate. "The pattern of Main Street," Kunstler writes, "is pretty simple: mixed use, mixed income, apartments and offices over the stores, moderate density, scaled to pedestrians, vehicles permitted but not allowed to dominate, buildings detailed with care, and built to last (though we still trashed it). Altogether, it was a pretty good development pattern. It produced places that people loved deeply."

Kunstler's prescriptions for community planning reflect the design movement known as New Urbanism, which emphasizes the ability to walk to most of the essentials of daily life, the importance of public gathering places and respectable civic architecture, and an end to the practice of designing buildings as if it's okay to dispose of them in a few years and erect something equally crass and insubstantial in their place. Arguing for communities where school and home are part of a lively mix of buildings and activities, Kunstler writes, "Without the underpinning of genuine community and its institutions, family life has predictably disintegrated, because the family alone cannot bear all the burdens and perform all the functions of itself and the community.... Children cannot acquire social skills unless they circulate in a real community among a variety of honorably occupied adults, not necessarily their parents, and are subject to the teachings and restraints of all such adults."

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For those who have followed New Urbanism closely, there are not a lot of surprises here, though I found some intriguing nuggets, such as Kunstler's assertion that horizontal windows are inherently undignified, signaling man reclining, whereas vertical windows represent human beings in the upright, a proper profile to display to the world. Despite occasional rough patches where he resorts to four-letter vulgarities, he comes up with countless utterances so pungent you want to recite them to everyone within earshot. Kunstler has the tartness and timing of a stand-up comic, so his complaints about American life often end up being as hilarious as they are damning.

Unlike many writers in this field, Kunstler is never gulled into praising projects and programs that have good intentions but dubious results. He is a truth-teller, stepping on the toes of liberals one moment, conservatives the next, with a frankness that makes an inspiring contrast to the risk-avoiding conventions of the journalism trade. His discussion of race and the cities is one of the best I've read.

Home from Nowhere, with its principled anger and its joy of righteous battle, is a book much needed just now.

Associate editor Philip Langdon is author of A Better Place to Live: Reshaping the American Suburb.

SOME LIKE HIM NOT

By Jesse Walker

Wilder Times: The Life of Billy Wilder
By Kevin Lally; Henry Holt,
496 pages, $30

Eight pages into *Wilder Times*, author Kevin Lally tells the story of Ilse, the young whore with whom future movie maker Billy Wilder had an affair at age 18. For Maurice Zolotow, author of the 1977 biography *Billy Wilder in Hollywood*, Wilder's discovery that Ilse was a lady of the night was (in Lally's words) "the central moment in Wilder's life, the Rosebud" that drove him to drop out of college, adopt his famous cynicism, and populate his pictures with prostitutes.

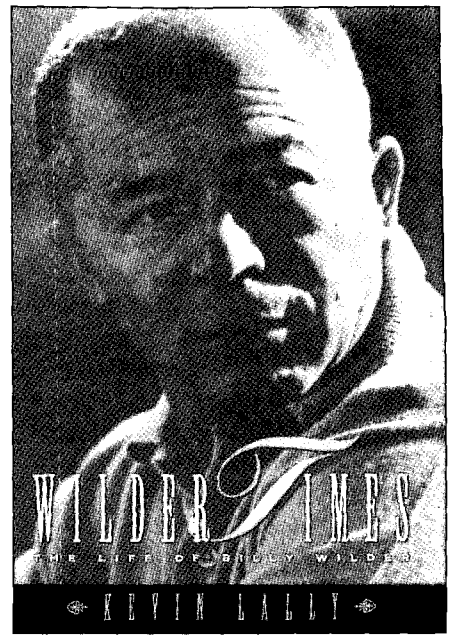
Lally reports this theory, then deftly deflates it with Wilder's side of the story: "I knew the girl to be a hooker. She was very pretty, and I paid her."

Therein lies the strength of Lally's account. The author is a workmanlike journalist without grand ambition, always aware that he is unlikely to unlock the secrets of his subject's soul, and therefore content to save his analysis for discussions of Wilder's movies.

In another man's biography, this might make for dry and dull reading—and the last chapter of this book, mostly given over to listing awards and accolades the director has received in his retirement, is just that. But Wilder is as famous for his wit as for his art, and few pages go by without an entertaining anecdote or one-liner. Thus shorn of pretentious psychohistory, Lally's book, while hardly a great literary achievement, is a solid guide to a great film maker's legacy.

Samuel "Billie" Wilder was born in 1906 in Sucha, a town ruled then by Austria-Hungary and today by Poland. He first distinguished himself as a journalist, writing for papers in Vienna and then Berlin, where he caused a stir with a four-part account of the two months he spent working as a gigolo. He began writing screenplays for German B movies, initially without screen credit; he also co-wrote *People on Sunday*, a well-received "art" film. He fled Germany when Hitler came to power, traveling first to France and then to the U.S. Barely able to speak the language, he nonetheless landed a job as a studio screenwriter, and within a few years was writing some of the best Hollywood pictures of the day, most in collaboration with Charles Brackett: *Ninotchka, Hold Back the Dawn, Ball of Fire.*

With *The Major and the Minor*, Wilder became one of the first writers within the studio system allowed to direct his own scripts. The films that followed include some of the finest ever made: *Double Indemnity, The Lost Weekend, Sunset Boulevard, Stalag 17, Witness for the Prosecution, Some Like it Hot, The Apartment.* Wilder's movies are, as Otto Friedrich wrote in *City of Nets*, "hard and cynical, dedicated to the proposition that every man had his price, and every woman too"; their plots characteristically turn on exploitation, deception, and masquerade. They are also bitterly comic, shot through



with the dark wit of a man who lost family to the Holocaust. This humor appears without regard for genre: *Double Indemnity*, a seminal *noir* thriller, displays dialogue far funnier than most self-proclaimed comedies.

Like any other film maker, Wilder produced the occasional dud (*The Emperor Waltz, Buddy Buddy*). By and large, though, he has created as excellent a body of work as any other director—arguably the best to emerge from the studio system.

Many will not share this judgment. The problem is not that Wilder was too much entertainer and too little artist; today, with traditional distinctions between "high" and "low" culture all but erased, that almost counts in his favor. The problem is Wilder's world view. Lally notes that Wilder has traditionally been attacked from two different directions. Some critics are dismayed by his trademark cynicism and his attraction to seamy subjects. Others accuse him of inconsistency, noting that for all the "dark" elements of Wilder's films—"disreputable and unsympathetic lead characters, startling gallows humor, a blistering view of the human condition"—his movies usually have happy endings, "often with an anti-hero learning a devastating moral lesson." In other words, Wilder has offended the two greatest collections of killjoys in the critical establishment: the straight-laced who decry any irreverent look at the underside

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of life, and the world-saving pessimists who cannot understand how any human bonds can form in a society so filled with exploitation and abuse.

Well, don't let the ninnies spoil your fun. Wilder's movies are far more entertaining than most of the slop available at the local video store. And his unattractive heroes and moral gray areas offer something more substantial than the average "quality" Hollywood picture. The social commentary in *The Apartment* is far sharper than anything in the heavy-handed message-movies that too many critics love to cheer, from *Gentleman's Agreement* to *Quiz Show*.

Today, his career behind him, Wilder is almost universally praised. But it's hard to find much evidence that the larger lesson has been learned. The critics who dismissed Wilder's best work may be gone, but their spirit lives on.

Jesse Walker is a Seattle-based writer.

ROCKY'S ROAD

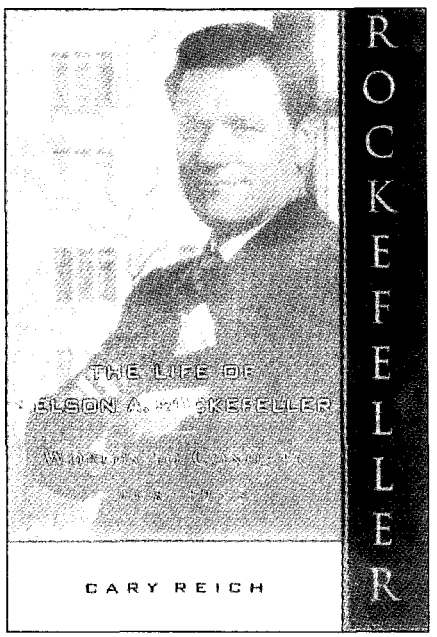
By Clark Stooksbury

The Life of Nelson A. Rockefeller
By Cary Reich;
Doubleday, 875 pages, $35

Nelson Rockefeller was the symbol of a type of liberal Republican that in recent years was assumed to be extinct. Colin Powell became perhaps this decade's only self-professed "Rockefeller Republican" when he briefly preened before TV cameras in the fall of 1995 before forsaking electoral politics for the call of the lecture circuit.

Rockefeller himself had the misfortune to begin his career as a presidential candidate when the power base of the Republican party was shifting geographically to the West and ideologically to the right. He was unsuccessful in his quests for the Republican nomination in the 1960s, but in a bizarre moment in American political history, ascended to the Vice Presidency in 1975 courtesy of President Ford and the U.S. Congress.

As one who bore a name with multiple connotations and spent much of his life on the public's business, Rockefeller merits a substantial biography, and financial journalist Cary Reich spent nearly a decade on the task. This massive volume, which will be joined by a second volume in 1998, concludes in 1958, right after its subject was elected governor of New York. *The Life of Nelson A. Rockefeller* is the result of copious research and dozens of interviews with family members and associates—and what a record the author had to work from. At an age when many men are working in the mail room or peeling potatoes in the Army, Nelson was building an empire. It is amazing what you can accomplish with drive, intelligence, and determination—backed by Grandpa's millions.



Reich, who focuses on the wealthy and powerful, must believe that everything they do is fascinating. Thus the reader is treated to many anecdotes we could probably stand to avoid. Is it any surprise that Nelson Rockefeller had a "special relationship" with president Ernest Hopkins while a student at Dartmouth? Or that the Rockefeller family was a major Dartmouth donor? At other times, Reich provides detailed accounts of genuinely captivating events, as when telling of the ill-fated Diego Rivera mural that was to have decorated the lobby of 30 Rockefeller Plaza. It seems that Rockefeller's patrons were unperturbed when the Communist Rivera included scenes of "Moscow May Day marchers, the gas masks and death ray, the venereal-disease germs hovering over card-playing, gin-swilling society ladies." But when the artist refused to remove an image of Lenin from the mural, he was told his services were no longer needed. He returned to Mexico City $21,500 richer and denounced, perhaps with some justification, the destruction of his mural as an act of "cultural vandalism."

Sensibly, Rockefeller's political career is the major focus of Reich's work. These sections tell of Rocky's involvement with many of the major and minor players of the era, among them perennial Republican Presidential non-contender Harold Stassen and Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The Brooklyn-born Reich managed to raise my Volunteer State ire by repeatedly referring to the Tennessean Hull as some sort of shoeless hayseed.

Rockefeller began his federal career during the administration of Franklin Roosevelt as the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. In that position and later as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American affairs, he exercised major influence on policy in the region and became a celebrity in Latin America. Rockefeller's efforts resulted in a tepid Argentinean declaration of war against the Axis powers in early 1945, and in the creation of U.N. Article 51, which allowed for regional alliances such as NATO. For a relatively low-level bureaucrat, he maintained remarkable access to the President. During his government employment, Rockefeller's resources enabled him to intrude into affairs beyond his assigned duties. Not part of the official U.S. delegation to the initial U.N. conference, he flew himself and his subordinates to San Francisco at his own expense and paid for their stay there. Within days he turned himself into a significant figure at the event. Even though he was maneuvered out of the State Department a few months later, Rockefeller retained power to affect the destiny of the United Nations, even securing the land for its permanent headquarters in New York City. It should not be surprising, with all we know about Rocky's use of the family fortune, that the site was paid for by John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Clark Stooksbury is assistant publisher of Liberty.

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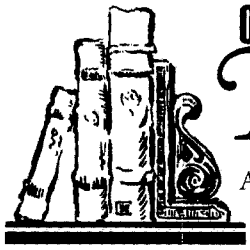

off The Shelf

A REGULAR REVIEW OF CLASSIC, OVER-LOOKED, NEWLY RELEVANT, OR OTHERWISE DESERVING OLDER BOOKS

TOCQUEVILLE'S ANTAGONIST

By Jason W.A. Bertsch

The American Commonwealth (1888)
By James Bryce;
Liberty Fund (1995) 2 vols.: 680 pages, 984 pages, $35

Perhaps it has always been hard to find critics of Alexis de Tocqueville. Today, it's almost impossible. In books, magazines, even on television and the Internet, Tocqueville is cheered—by liberals just as much as conservatives. A professor of mine—she called herself a "postmodern democratic pluralist"—once argued that Malcolm X and Richard Rorty were indirect descendants of Tocqueville. So, however much the Frenchman measures up to his reputation, it's still refreshing to find his rare antagonist, even if it means going back 100 years to James Bryce.

Bryce wrote *The American Commonwealth* because he believed Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* had misrepresented the United States. Born in Ireland and educated in Scotland and England, where he eventually became a Member of Parliament, Bryce considered *Democracy in America* too speculative, too "full of fine observation and elevated thinking." Bryce hoped, when he first visited the United States in 1870, and when he first published *The American Commonwealth* in 1888, to avoid the Tocquevillean clouds and focus "on the facts of the case…letting them speak for themselves rather than pressing upon the reader my own conclusions." He would use the "scientific method" to study American government and society, an approach Bryce accused Tocqueville of shunning.

As a result, *The American Commonwealth* is an expansive two-volume work (*Democracy in America*, though also two volumes, is 710 pages shorter) covering topics ranging from "The Working of City Governments" to "The Position of Women" to, most famously, "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen Presidents" and "Why the Best Men Do Not Go Into Politics." Whereas Tocqueville spent six pages on American political parties, Bryce devotes 23 chapters to the subject. The 11 chapters on public opinion, 16 on state governments, and 33 on national government make *The American Commonwealth* a political junkie's (and American history buff's) dream come true.

A student of Bryce's, Woodrow Wilson, was right when he wrote that Bryce seems "a little confused, reminding one now and again of the political system he is describing." *The American Commonwealth* suffers from its ambition to weigh all sides and all facts of all issues. Bryce defended his sacrifice of brevity and clarity in the name of thoroughness. Generalizations and overarching theories, Bryce held, had led Tocqueville to become preoccupied with the problems of democracy more than with America herself.

Our propensity to highlight *Democracy in America*'s sunnier passages notwithstanding, Tocqueville was in fact somewhat gloomy. He believed the young nation's unprecedented experiment in self-government was fundamentally flawed. For "democracy is the child of ignorance," Tocqueville argued, "parent of dullness and conceit. The opinion of the greatest number being the universal standard, everything is reduced to the level of vulgar minds. Originality is stunted, variety disappears, no man thinks for himself, or if he does, fears to express what he thinks."

Bryce, to be sure, was not exactly a cheerleader of America. He thought that our Constitution was flawed, that our Founders were indecisive, that the party system existed in a vacuum of "unreality," and that American politicians were mostly simpletons. Moreover, Bryce believed that separation of powers—a device roundly celebrated until his time and usually credited, even today, as the Constitution's most glorious success—was too restrictive and "somewhat inferior" to Britain's parliamentary system. But unlike Tocqueville, Bryce still considered the United States, even with all its structural flaws, top among the world's nations. It's no coincidence that Bryce admitted to "falling in love" with America, something Tocqueville never did.

Why Bryce thought so highly of America is possibly the most important issue raised by *The American Commonwealth*. Indeed other men (like James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, or even Tocqueville) saw in America a unique "exceptionalism." But their admiration and hopes for her were rooted less in their respect for some monolithic "American character" than in their judgment that the superior founding, form, and composition of American government would guard against, in Madison's words, the "diseases most incident" to American democracy; in fact, the "republican remedy" so brilliantly described in *The Federalist Papers* depended most of all on "the extent and proper *structure* of the Union," not on the virtue of its people.

Bryce began the revolutionary task of reversing such logic, of leading the debate in a different direction, toward the trumpeting of more traditional, populist virtues—a bit of a paradox, since Bryce always saw himself as a man of the Left. He concluded that the real jewel in the American crown was not its Constitution or its form of government but its citizens. It is, according to Bryce, "the good sense and patriotism of the people…which find, in moments of difficulty, remedies for the inevitable faults of the system."

This seems to be the tenet that today links all conservative factions—Burkeans, "neocons," "paleocons," "theocons," even libertarians. For good or ill, this is *The American Commonwealth*'s most lasting contribution. And a compelling reason to return to it today.

Jason W.A. Bertsch is managing editor of The Public Interest.

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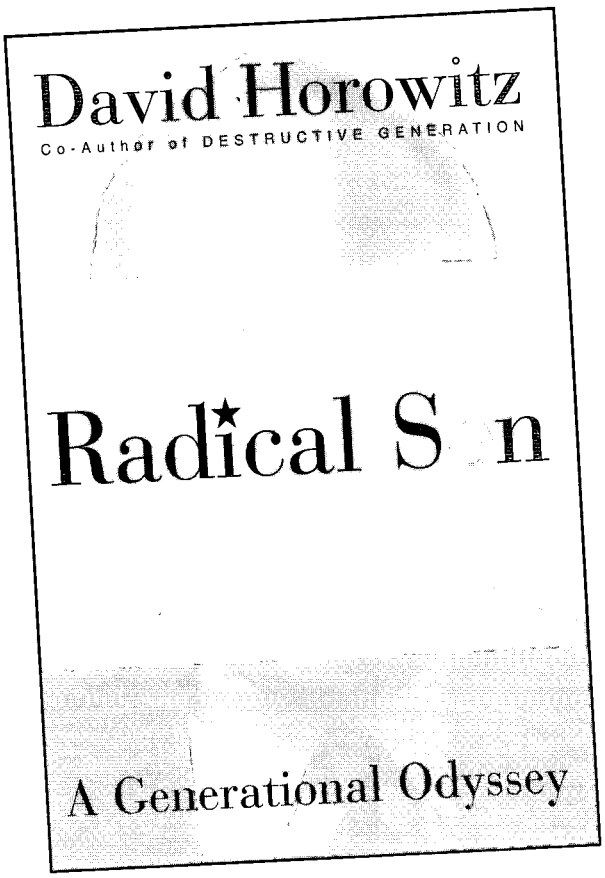
The First Great American Autobiography of This Generation.

—GEORGE GILDER, *AUTHOR OF WEALTH AND POVERTY*



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DAVID HOROWITZ is the bestselling co-author of *The Rockefellers* and *The Kennedys*, president of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, and co-editor of *Heterodoxy*.

Published by The Free Press, *Radical Son* is available at local bookstores everywhere; or call 800-752-6562 to order copies.

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EDITED BY MARTIN MORSE WOOSTER

the Digest

SUMMARIES OF IMPORTANT NEW RESEARCH FROM THE NATION'S UNIVERSITIES, THINK TANKS, AND INVESTIGATIVE PUBLICATIONS

POLITICS

Rein in our Judges

Edwin Meese III and Rhett DeHart, "The Imperial Judiciary...and What Congress Can Do About It," in Policy Review *(January/February 1997), Heritage Foundation, 214 Massachusetts Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.*

Thomas Jefferson warned that if unelected judges were the only interpreters of the Constitution, "a very dangerous doctrine" would result "which would place us under the despotism of an oligarchy." Jefferson's nightmare has come true. Today, judges have more power than ever. But Meese and DeHart of the Heritage Foundation suggest that Congress can "confine the judiciary to its proper constitutional role." The authors' recommendations include:

• *Senators should block more nominations.* Senators must confirm each federal judge, but most of the time they routinely approve whomever the President selects. Meese and DeHart urge members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to be more cautious and to grill candidates about their temptation to activism. The Senate should also have individual votes on each nominee, instead of approving candidates in batches.

• *Congress should limit the powers of federal courts.* Article III, section 1 of the Constitution grants Congress the power to create or dissolve any federal court except the Supreme Court. The 104th Congress passed two laws designed to restrict the power of these lower courts: the Prison Litigation Reform Act, which restricted the power of federal courts to regulate state prisoners; and the Effective Death Penalty Act, which reduced the number of appeals that prisoners on death row could file. Congress should impose more curbs, say Meese and DeHart. It should restrict the ability of judges to force states or cities to raise taxes. It should restrain the ability of federal judges to micromanage schools and hospitals.

• *Congress should reduce the number of federal crimes.* Congress has federalized so many crimes that it's now a federal crime to ship water hyacinths across a state border without permission. Congress should start anew and only declare the most important crimes to be under federal jurisdiction. And Congress should impose a "federalism assessment" on legislation that requires every bill to include a "justification for a national solution to the issue in question."

ECONOMICS

Women: The First Sex?

Diana Furchtgott-Roth and Christine Stolba, Women's Figures: The Economic Progress of Women in America. *Independent Women's Forum/AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

Feminists like to argue that women, as victims of discrimination, are predestined to be less successful than men in the workplace unless the federal government imposes massive affirmative action schemes. Furchtgott-Roth of the American Enterprise Institute and Emory University graduate student Stolba disagree. "The statistical evidence shows that American women have achieved startling gains since the early part of the century," they write. "The figures suggest that they will continue to succeed."

Wages: According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the median weekly wage of American women in 1995 was equivalent to 76 percent of what men earn. But this "wage gap" results from a variety of factors; women are more likely to leave the labor force to bear children and often prefer to take lower-salaried positions that provide flexible hours. In any event, the "wage gap" is steadily narrowing, particularly for younger workers. In 1974, for example, women aged 16-29 earned 74 percent of what comparable men made; by 1993, twentysomething women earned 92 percent of what men their age made. And by 1994, women aged 27-33 who didn't have children earned 98 percent of what comparable men made.

"Glass ceilings": It's often assumed a "glass ceiling" prevents women from running large enterprises. But it usually takes 25 years to climb to the top of a big business. Since there were few women at lower levels of firms in 1965 or 1970, it shouldn't be surprising that few have so far become CEOs. Moreover, Korn/Ferry, an executive search firm, reports that the number of female executive vice presidents in large corporations more than doubled in the past decade, while women senior vice-presidents increased by 75 percent. This will ensure that more women will be CEOs in the future.

But more important than the number of women heading the 500 biggest corporations in America are the millions of women who have become entrepreneurs. As of January 1996, nearly 8 million women owned firms that employ 15.5 million people and generate $1.4 trillion in sales. The Department of Labor reports that women are currently creating businesses twice as fast as men.

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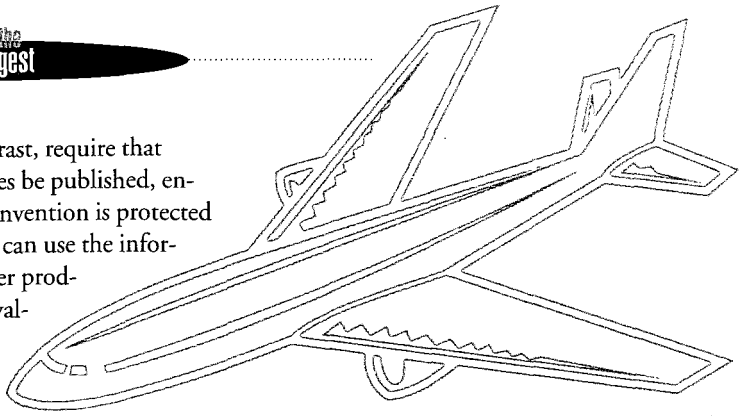

Education: Women are becoming better educated than men. Since the mid-1980s, women have outnumbered men in graduate school. In 1994, for the first time, more women earned bachelor's, associate's, and master's degrees.

Furchtgott-Roth and Stolba urge feminists to stop using terms like "glass ceiling" and "wage gap" that are "rhetorically powerful but factually bankrupt." They argue that statistics demonstrate women's steady economic progress, and that "data cited as evidence of systematic discrimination are often imprecise at best, and often otherwise misleading and unfounded."

The Power of Ideas

Michael Novak, The Fire of Invention, The Fuel of Interest: On Intellectual Property. *AEI Press, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

In the original Constitution, the word *right* occurs only once. In Article 1, Section 8, the Framers explicitly granted to Congress the power "to promote the Progress of Science and Useful Arts, by securing for limited times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." As James Madison noted in *Federalist* 43, a national system of patents and copyrights was one of the rare cases where "the public good fully coincides...with the claims of individuals."

Yet some prominent thinkers argue that patents and copyrights are unnecessary government intrusions in the market. Economist Friedrich von Hayek, for instance, argued that patents induce corporate scientists to work more on creating patentable products and less on basic research. Other critics argue that patents create artificial monopolies, or slow the flow of information to less developed countries.

Novak of AEI disagrees. "By stimulating useful inventions and creative works from which a grateful public benefits," he writes, "a patent regime serves the common good better than any known alternative." Suppose there were no patents. How would inventors protect their discoveries? They could create trade secrets, like the formula for Coca-Cola. But this would ensure that new information remains hidden. Patents, by contrast, require that technological advances be published, ensuring both that the invention is protected and that competitors can use the information to create better products. Without the royalties patents provide, what incentive is there for inventors to create new products?

Moreover, countries with weak or no patent regimes often lose their smartest engineers and inventors to wealthy countries with well-developed patent systems. Some critics argue that patents ensure that less developed countries are deprived of the right to copy software or drugs cheaply, but this is misguided, Novak writes. If lower-income nations had stronger patent systems, their inventors would have less incentive to move to America or Europe. Without strong patent systems, multinational corporations would have no reason to invest in the Third World—and those small corporations that already exist in poorer nations would be unable to become big businesses. "Regimes without patents," Novak writes, "penalize inventors and reward freeloaders."

How Safe are the Skies?

Robert W. Hahn, "The Cost of Antiterrorist Rhetoric," in Regulation *(Number 4, 1996), Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.*

In the wake of the explosion of TWA Flight 800 over Long Island last year, President Clinton ordered the nation's airports to tighten security through such measures as requiring passengers to show photo identification, answer more questions about the contents of their bags, and spend more time having their bags scanned by screening devices. "As a result of these steps," President Clinton said, "not only will the American people feel safer, they will be safer."

Hahn of AEI disagrees. In the name of fighting terrorism, the administration has made flying substantially more expensive but increased safety only marginally. According to the Federal Aviation Administration, the extra half-hour that passengers will now have to spend in airports as a result of the new anti-terrorism proposals will cost passengers billions of dollars annually. And if the administration requires that domestic airlines verify that each bag on board an airplane belongs to a passenger traveling on that flight (as is currently required on international flights), passengers will have to spend an hour more on each flight, thus costing passengers billions more.

Hahn calculates that additional anti-terrorism measures—such as new devices to screen for explosives—could add $6 billion to the crime-fighting bill. In addition, mandatory increases in travel time indirectly encourage short- and medium-range travelers to drive instead of fly, and cars are less safe than planes. Hahn predicts that between 30 to 140 Americans will lose their lives on the roads annually as a result of the anti-terrorism measures. "It is quite likely there will be a net loss of lives as a result of the new laws," Hahn writes, "in addition to billions of dollars of costs to consumers and taxpayers."

The only way to eliminate the threat of terrorism, Hahn contends, would be to eliminate air travel. While some restrictions, like banning curbside luggage check-ins, might be sensible, politicians should not blithely assume that draconian terrorism-fighting measures can be achieved without economic consequences.

Everybody's Getting Richer

John C. Weicher, "Increasing Inequality of Wealth?" in The Public Interest *(Winter 1997), 1112 16th Street N.W. #530, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

Liberals like to argue that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Weicher from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis would like to revise that slogan: The rich—*and* the poor—are getting richer.

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Weicher examined two surveys conducted by the Federal Reserve Board in 1983 and 1989 on Americans' personal wealth—the assets people own minus the debts they owe. Measured in constant 1995 dollars, the wealth of all the households in the U.S. rose from $16 trillion in 1983 to $21 trillion in 1989. By contrast, in 1962 (the only comparable survey) American household wealth was $6 trillion.

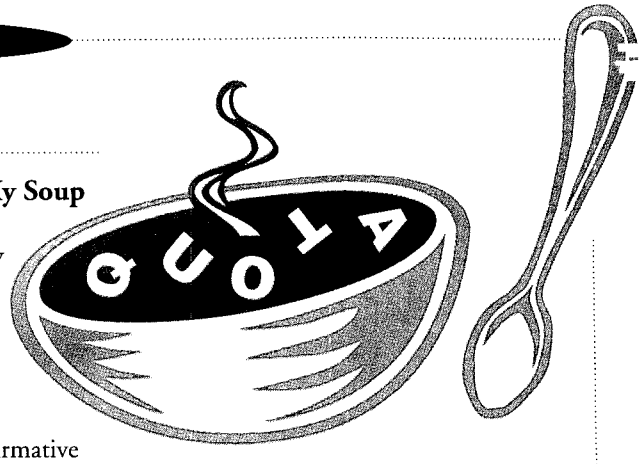
The richest 1 percent of Americans, with personal assets in the $2 million-plus range, owned between 32 and 36 percent of America's wealth in 1983, and between 35 and 37 percent of the wealth in 1989. But these rich people are not scions of great fortunes. Most were entrepreneurs who built their assets themselves. Over half of rich people's assets either came from the net worth of enterprises they owned or from real estate they held for investment. By contrast, the percentage of wealth that rich people owned in stocks, bonds, or trusts fell by 12 percent between 1983 and 1989.

Moreover, the people who were rich in 1983 were not necessarily rich in 1989. In 1983, the average rich person was a self-employed professional, such as a doctor, architect, or lawyer. But by 1989, the typical rich person made his wealth in insurance or real estate. "There was apparently a great deal of mobility at the top, even over just a few years," Weicher writes.

Other classes also benefited during the 1980s. About 30 percent of American household wealth is in homes, and during the 1980s, many middle-class Americans saw the value of their homes rise, both because of general housing increases and because they paid off their mortgages. In addition, stock ownership became more diffuse, enabling middle-class Americans to benefit from economic growth.

Since the 1920s the richest 1 percent of Americans has owned about 30 percent of the wealth in the U.S. on average. But the fact that the constantly changing rich don't see their share of wealth rise permanently to 40 or 50 percent suggests that hard work and persistence can enable poor people to become wealthier. "Overall, as a society," Weicher concludes, "we have been getting richer, rich and poor alike, more or less evenly."

SOCIETY



Oops, There's a Quota in My Soup

John Fonte, The Tragedy of Civil Rights: How Equal Opportunity Became Equal Results. *Center for Equal Opportunity, 815 15th Street N.W. #928, Washington, D.C. 20005.*

What should the goal of affirmative action be? Should the government provide equal opportunities for minorities or mandate equal results? Fonte of AEI suggests that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 might provide some insight into these questions. A return to the goals of that bill, he argues, would provide an "alternative to the racial-spoils system of proportional representation that has risen up since its passage."

Supporters of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—a coalition of northern Democrats and Republicans, many of them conservative—insisted that the bill would not lead to quotas. Senator Hubert Humphrey, for example, said that he would start eating the pages of Title VII of the bill if opponents could find any reference to government-mandated quotas. In addition, supporters of the bill attached paragraph 703(j) to the bill, stating that nothing in the legislation would require employers to hire workers based on the racial or sexual proportions of "any community, state, section, or other area." Forty members of Congress, including such well-known liberals as Humphrey, George McGovern, Edmund Muskie, Emmanuel Celler, and John Lindsay, signed a statement opposing quotas. In addition, Fonte notes, "not a single member of Congress supported statistical balance, numerical requirements, or employment quotas" imposed by government, though two senators said they would not object if employers voluntarily imposed quotas.

Through such decisions as *Griggs* v. *Duke Power Company* (1971), the Supreme Court allowed the creation of quotas and mandates that now ensures, for example, that the federal government views daughters of *Fortune* 500 CEOs as more disadvantaged than sons of poor families. Will lawmakers return to the vision of 30 years ago and simply work to end discrimination? Or will they continue the present regime of "proportionalism and discriminatory group preferences by undemocratic means"?

Don't Erase Personal History

T. Markus Funk, "A Mere Youthful Indiscretion? Re-examining the Policy of Expunging Juvenile Delinquency Records," in University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform *(Summer 1996), University of Michigan Law School, 801 Monroe, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109.*

When a juvenile offender turns 18, his criminal record is usually deleted from official files. No one—employers, probation officers, and even judges—knows about his past offenses. But as teenage criminals grow ever more lawless, Funk, a clerk to a district court judge, thinks expungement a bad idea. "It is questionable whether acts of violence or repeated nonviolent offenses," he writes, "should be eliminated from one's criminal history."

The idea of expunging teenage criminal records arose from a 1960's notion called "labeling theory." Prominent criminologists of the era argued that if a first offender were permanently "labeled" as a juvenile delinquent, he might prove he justified the label by committing more crimes. They convinced legislatures and Congress that sealing juvenile criminal records would give troubled teens a second chance to avoid wrongdoing.

Expunging records, Funk argues, might be a good idea if a teen committed a single nonviolent bad deed. But the Justice Department reports that teenage criminals are growing increasingly violent every year. Between 1983 and 1992, the juvenile arrest rate for aggravated assault doubled, while the number of juveniles arrested for murder and for illegal

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weapon use more than doubled. The Justice Department estimates that kids between 12 and 18 commit 28 percent of the robberies, rapes, aggravated assaults, and thefts in the U.S. The department also predicts that by 2010 the number of teens arrested for violent crimes will double, while the teenage murder arrest rate will rise by 45 percent. Why, Funk asks, should a teenager who has become a habitual violent criminal by 18 deserve to have his criminal record expunged?

Expunging their teenage records gives career criminals substantial advantages. Police treat them more leniently. Judges are likely to give them lighter sentences, thinking them first- or second-time offenders instead of hardened criminals. Employers are more likely to hire them—and more likely to suffer the economic consequences when these lawbreakers rob, rape, and steal on the job.

Funk suggests two reforms to replace expungement: First, nonviolent juvenile offenders should pay restitution to their victims instead of going to juvenile detention centers. Second, expungement should be limited to juvenile offenders who commit less than three nonviolent crimes, unless the teenager remains crime-free for five years. Habitual criminals should have their records sealed rather than erased. Judges, police, and employers who require security clearances for jobs should have access to teenage arrest records.

The Bomb in Public Housing

James R. Barth and Robert E. Litan, "Uncle Sam in the Housing Market: The Section 8 Rental Subsidy Disaster," in The Brookings Review *(Fall 1996), 1775 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been a prime target for budget cutters. But eliminating HUD programs won't necessarily save taxpayers' money. Auburn University finance professor Barth and Brookings fellow Litan point to HUD's Section 8 program as an example of a failed government effort that could cost taxpayers billions if not terminated properly.

Begun in 1974, Section 8 provided developers with government-guaranteed 20-year mortgages to build public housing. Under the program, residents pay 30 percent of their rent and the government pays the rest. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) pays creditors if a developer defaults on the mortgage.

Since the government pays whatever rent a developer charges, almost half of Section 8 apartments charge rents significantly higher than comparable unsubsidized apartments. In Casper, Wyoming, for example, Section 8 apartments rent for $880 a month, compared to the average two-bedroom apartment rental of $425. But Section 8 recipients are cut off from their benefits if they leave a subsidized building for an unsubsidized one, ensuring that "the system creates two hostages: tenants to their units and government to keeping the system afloat."

In 1983, the Section 8 program was replaced by a voucher, but existing Section 8 mortgages remained in force. These mortgages are now expiring. If Section 8 developers defaulted on all mortgages, the FHA would have to pay banks as much as $18 billion. Last year, Congress voted to extend existing mortgages by one year, since only 1,000 units had mortgages due in 1996. But in 1997 an additional 236,000 units—a quarter of all Section 8 units—will have their mortgages expire.

In 1996, HUD tried to convert Section 8 mortgages into vouchers, but its efforts were blocked by a coalition of landlords and tenants. HUD is currently devising a scheme where third parties (nonprofits, tenants' associations) would take Section 8 mortgages from the government's hands. But Congress should convert Section 8 into a voucher program. Voucherizing Section 8, Barth and Litan argue, will save money and "give Section 8 tenants the same freedom to move that is enjoyed by everyone else in this country."

We welcome submissions of reports, articles, or papers you think should be summarized in THE DIGEST. Please send to P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907.

OTHER COUNTRIES

African Fascists

Michael Chege, "Africa's Murderous Professors," in The National Interest *(Winter 1996/97), 1112 16th Street N.W. #540, Washington, D.C. 20036.*

Purveyors of ethnic cleansing, racism, and hate-mongering are usually white. But Chege of the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida (Gainesville), notes that African intellectuals are increasingly prone to hate-filled rhetoric against minorities.

Rwanda, for example, was a land 80 percent Hutu and 20 percent Tutsi. But in the early 1990s, Hutu intellectuals advanced "shrill calls for Tutsi extermination." *Kangura*, a Hutu-controlled newspaper, listed the "Hutu ten commandments," including banning interethnic marriage with the Tutsi. And three professors at the Rwandan National University created "doctrines of Hutu ethnic supremacy" that "would have made Joseph Goebbels proud." They called for the Tutsi either to be slaughtered or shipped back to Ethiopia, their alleged homeland.

This incendiary rhetoric, Chege believes, helped fuel the Rwandan civil war of 1994 in which 850,000 Tutsi died. But similar ethnic hatred, he charges, is beginning to happen in Kenya against the Kikuyu, a tribe that, though the largest and most successful, only constitutes 23 percent of Kenya's population. Former Information Minister Burudi Nabwera calls Kikuyus "devils...which you should not allow into your house." Other propagandists call Kikuyu "hyenas," and claim that Kikuyu women studied in the West in order to learn prostitution.

Kenya's President, Daniel arap Moi, has claimed that if he dies or is ousted, "this country will be just like Rwanda." If Kenya's hate-mongers persist in denouncing the Kikuyu, Chege predicts that arap Moi's statement might prove true. Foreigners can do little to prevent the rising tide of ethnic hatred. "It is up to Africans themselves," he writes, "to put their own house in order by raising the alarm against the scourge of hate

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speech and arbitrary rule against the most vulnerable."

Lessons from Liberated Kiwis

Robert O'Quinn and Nigel Ashford, The Kiwi Effect: What Britain Can Learn from New Zealand. *Adam Smith Institute, 23 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BL, England.*

In 1984, New Zealand's economy was anemic. Decades of protectionist policies caused industrial stagnation. Tight exchange controls limited foreign investment. State-owned monopolies provided bad service at high prices. Government's share of gross domestic product increased from 28 percent in 1972 to 41 percent in 1984. Budget deficits continued to increase, and inflation hit a rate of 17 percent before wage and price controls were imposed in 1982.

But today, *The Economist* rates New Zealand's economy as the freest in the world, with falling unemployment and steadily increasing budget surpluses. O'Quinn of the Heritage Foundation and Ashford from Britain's Staffordshire University show how Wellington's free market reforms provide "an alternative to the bureaucratic model of delivering goods and services."

Since 1984 the Labour and National parties have launched massive programs of privatization and financial deregulation. Tariffs have been steadily reduced; wage, price, and currency controls abolished; farm subsidies reduced from 30 percent of farmers' income to less than 3 percent; and income tax rates cut from a maximum of 66 percent to 33 percent, though a national sales tax was introduced in 1986.

New Zealand has made dramatic progress in privatization. The Labour government initially "corporatized" state-owned enterprises, restructuring them so that they resembled businesses and not bureaucracies. Monopolies in electricity, telecommunications, and domestic air travel were abolished, forcing efficiency in state-owned businesses. Twenty-five firms, including Air New Zealand, the Government Printing Office, and the national telephone company, were subsequently privatized. The remaining "corporatized" firms, though still government-owned, became "wealth maximizers" instead of money losers. New Zealand Electricity, for example, cut staff by 71 percent over five years and doubled its profits. New Zealand Post increased its percentage of next-day deliveries from 17 percent to 98 percent and cut postal rates substantially.

True, though government's share of New Zealand's GDP has fallen, it is still at 36 percent. And though corporatized, the government still owns such large enterprises as New Zealand Coal, New Zealand Electricity, and three forestry companies. But the New Zealand experience, the authors suggest, provides "a guide book on how to reduce expenditures, lower taxes, and improve service delivery."

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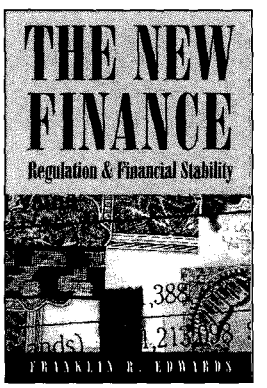
—WALL STREET JOURNAL



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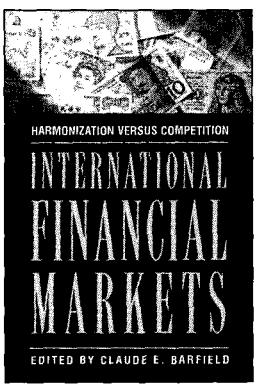

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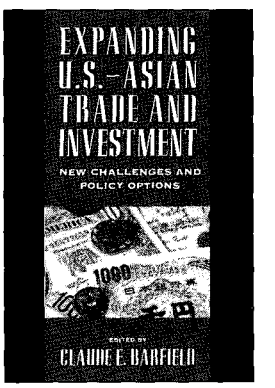

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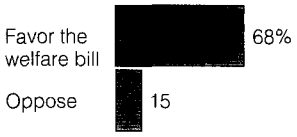
Opinion Pulse

EDITED BY KARLYN BOWMAN

WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

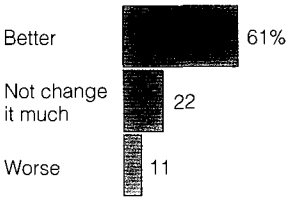
As President Clinton contemplates revisions of the welfare reform legislation passed last year, he should be aware of the strong public backing the law has. Six in ten say the legislation will make the system better, only 11 percent think it will make it worse. Most people say the welfare cuts are about right, but more say they don't go far enough than say they go too far. Voters are even more adamant than the public as a whole in their belief that the cuts do not go far enough. Mothers with young children and no family members to support them should work, the public says.

Question: **Turning now to the welfare bill passed by Congress last week—would you say you generally...?**



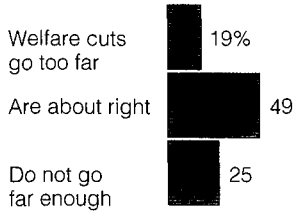
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for CNN and *USA TODAY*, August 5–7, 1996.

Question: **Do you think this welfare reform legislation will make the welfare system...?**



Source: Survey by the Hart/Teeter Research Companies for NBC News and the *Wall Street Journal*, August 2–6, 1996.

Question: **The welfare bill that recently passed in Washington makes cuts in benefits to welfare recipients. Would you say...**

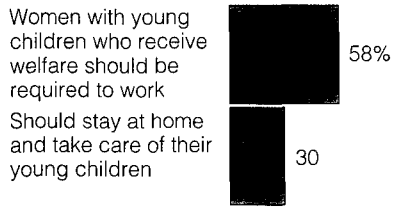


Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for CNN and *USA Today*, August 30–September 1, 1996.

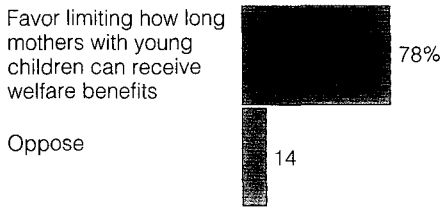
Voters' Views

On Election Day, voters were asked a question similar to the one at the left. Eighteen percent said the federal welfare law cuts too much, 37 percent said it is about right, and 39 percent said the cuts do not go far enough. A quarter of Clinton voters said the welfare bill cuts too much, but slightly more of them, 27 percent, said it didn't cut enough. Forty-one percent said the bill was about right. Seven percent of Dole voters said the bill cut too much, and 54 percent said it did not cut enough. A third of Dole supporters said it was about right.

Question: **Do you think...?**

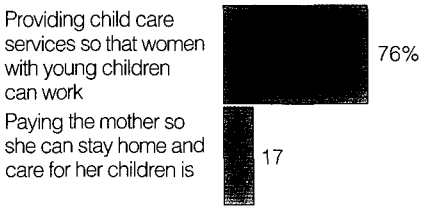


Question: **Do you...?**



Of those who favored a limit on welfare, 33 percent still favored limiting welfare even if it meant that many children would be living in households with no income; 37 percent opposed the change under these terms.

Question: **Which do you think is more important...?**



Source: Surveys by the *New York Times*, June 20–23, 1996.

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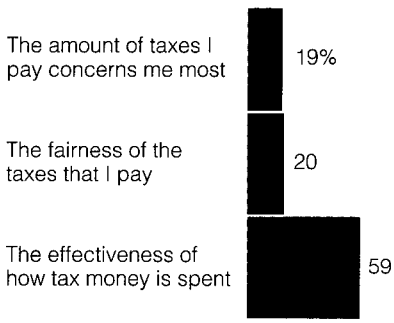
THINKING ABOUT TAXES

The effectiveness of how tax dollars are spent is a greater concern to Americans than either the amount or the fairness of the taxes they pay. That's not surprising when the public believes that almost half of every tax dollar collected by Washington is wasted, and that the era of big government is not over. Most people say the federal taxes they pay are too high, and only 14 percent say they are very willing to pay increased taxes, even if the money would be spent effectively. Thirty-six percent say they are not willing at all to pay increased taxes.

Question: **When thinking about taxation in general, what concerns you most...?**



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, December 12–16, 1996.

Question: **How many cents out of every federal tax dollar collected by Washington are wasted by the federal government?**

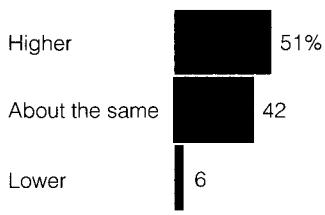
Source: Survey by Lake Research and the Tarrance Group for *U.S. News & World Report*, November 2–3, 1996.

Question: **Do you...?**

Source: Survey by Penn & Schoen for the Democratic Leadership Council, November 9–11, 1996.

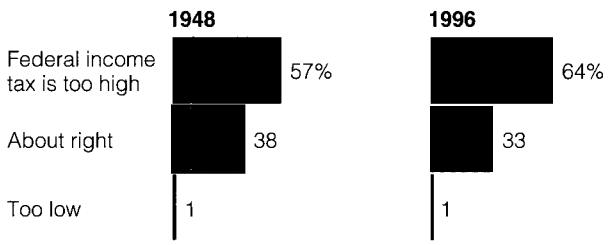
Question: **By the end of Bill Clinton's term in office, do you think...?**

The percentage of the income you pay in federal taxes will be



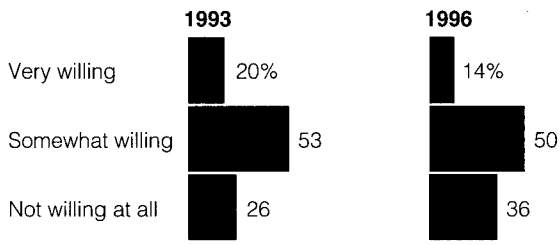
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, January 14–17, 1997

Question: **Do you consider the amount of federal income tax you have to pay as...?**



Source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization for CNN and *USA Today*, latest that of April 9–10, 1996.

Question: **If you were certain that an increase in taxes would be effectively spent on meeting public needs, how willing would you be to pay increased taxes?**



Source: Survey by Louis Harris and Associates, December 12–16, 1996.

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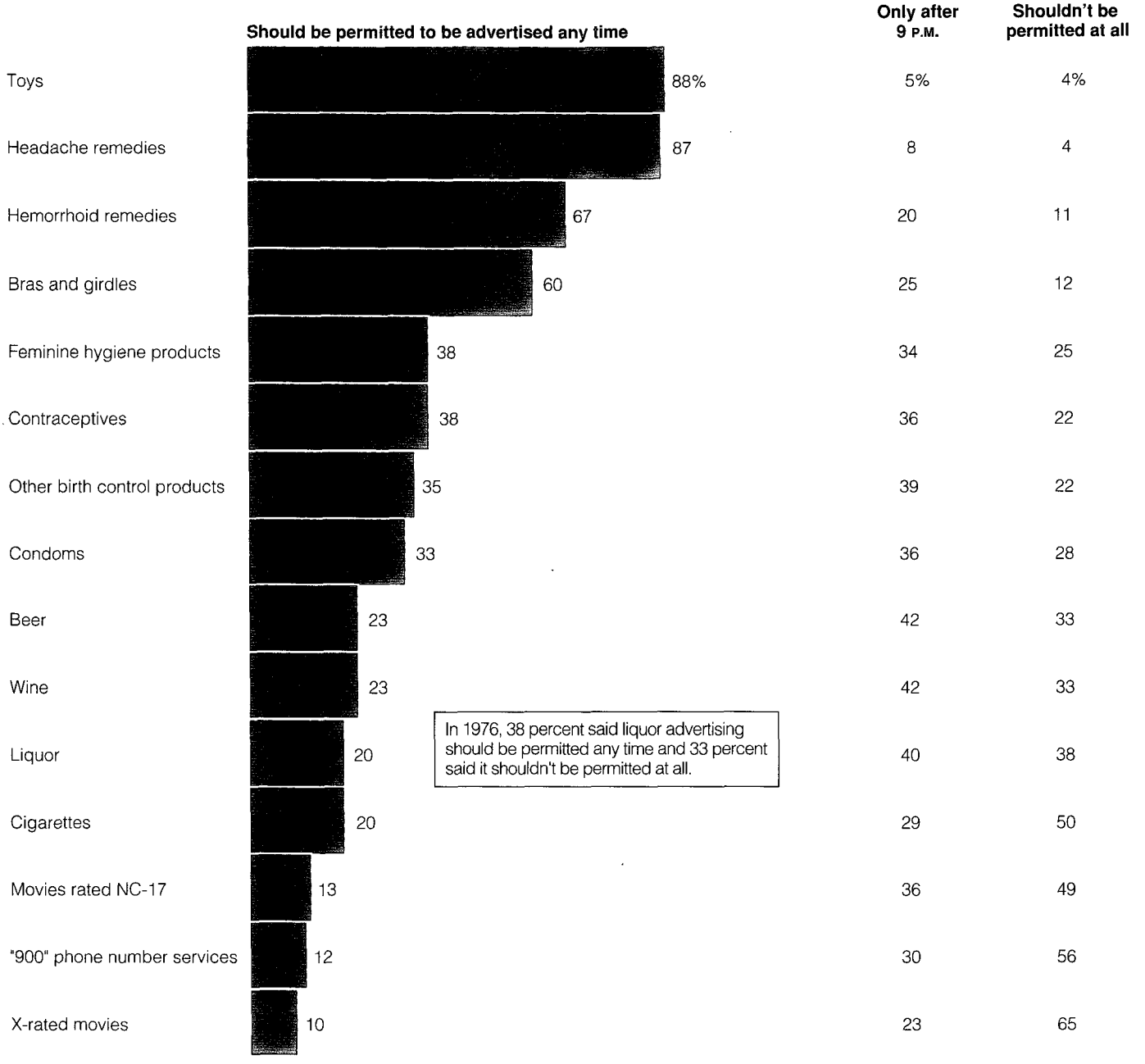
TV ADS: WHAT'S APPROPRIATE, WHEN

The public has firm ideas about what products are appropriate to advertise on television and when. Many want beer, wine, and liquor ads only after 9 P.M., and a third or more think advertising of these products should not be permitted at all on television. As the box below suggests, attitudes toward liquor advertisements—in the news these days because the industry has lifted its voluntary ban on broadcast ads—have hardened over time as society has become less accepting of alcohol use.

Question: **People feel differently about the kinds of products advertised on television. Some people feel that certain products should be permitted to be advertised any time, that others should be permitted only after 9 P.M. in the evening, when young children are less likely to be watching, and that still others shouldn't be permitted at all. Here is a list of some different products. For each one, would you tell me whether you think...**



Source: Survey by Roper Starch Worldwide, July 13–20, 1996.

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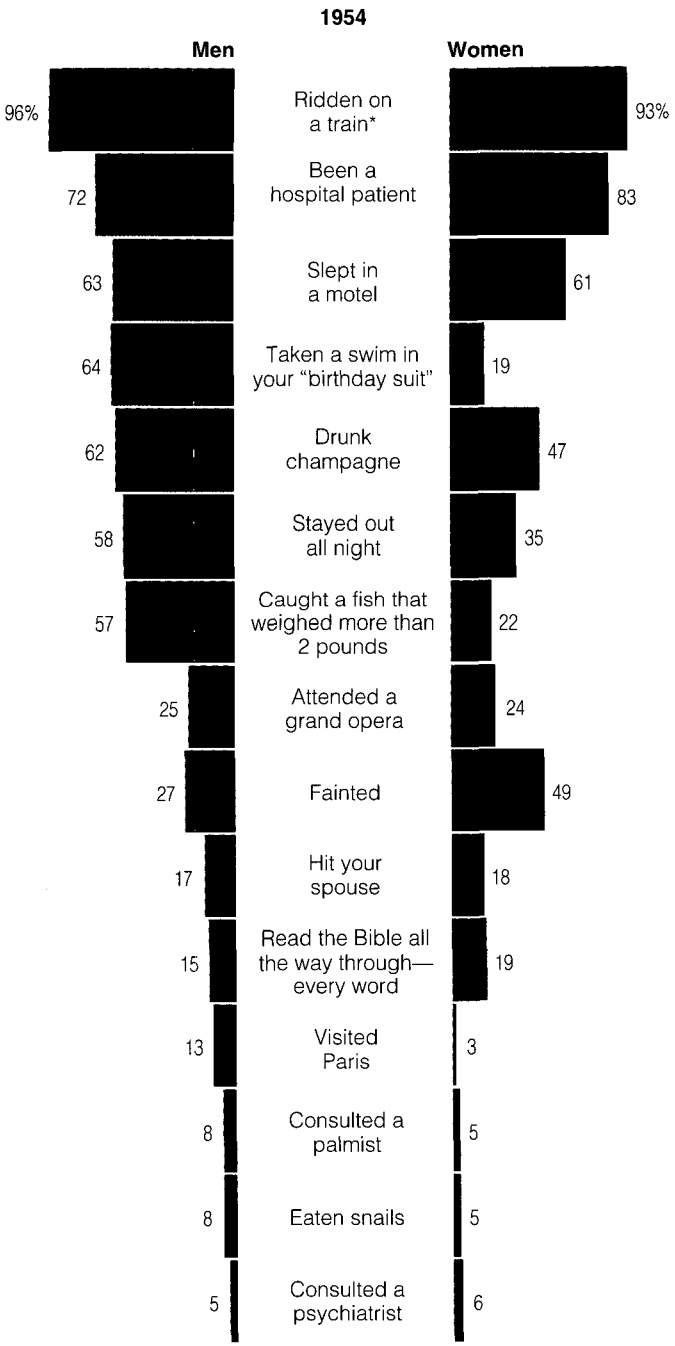
LIFE'S LITTLE EXPERIENCES

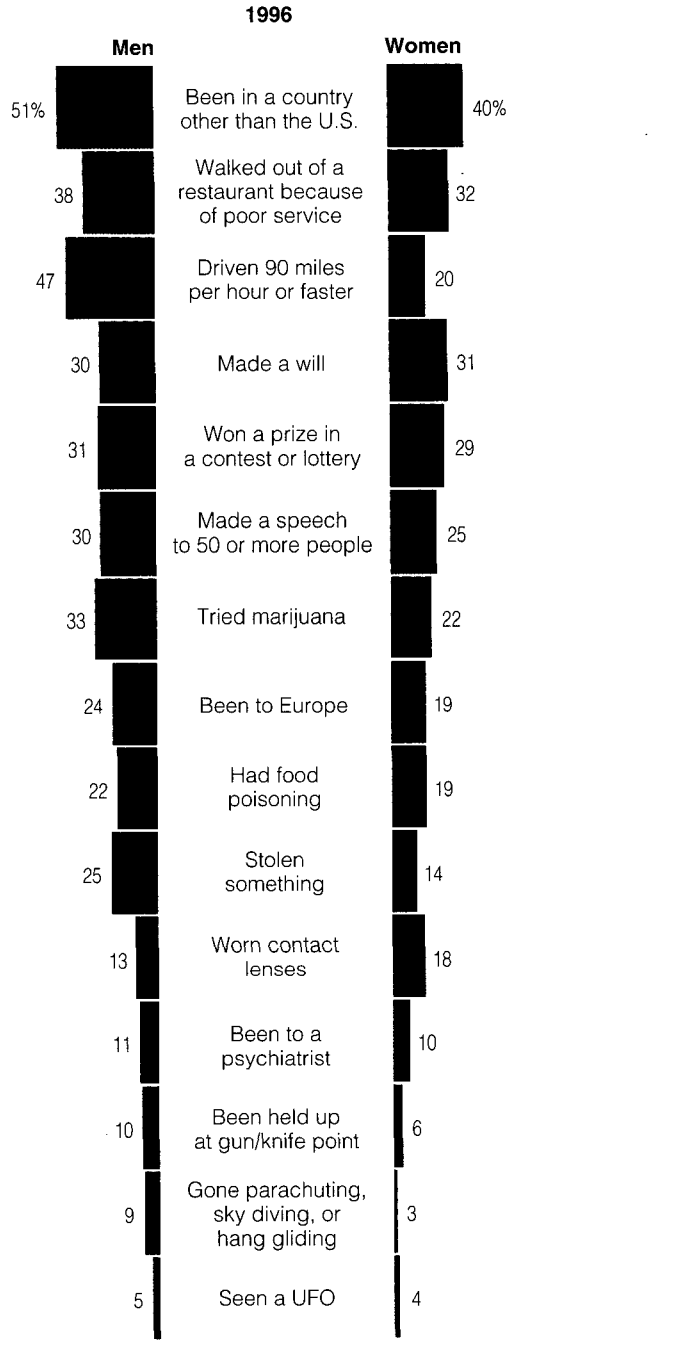
Just for fun we've taken a look at things men and women told George Gallup they had done in 1954 and then at things people told Roper Starch Worldwide they had done in 1996. In 1954, 64 percent of men, but only 19 percent of women said they had gone skinny dipping. In 1996, a third of men and 22 percent of women admitted they had tried marijuana. Twice as many people in 1996 say they have sought psychiatric help as said that in 1954, though the percentages in both years are small. A near majority of men and only 20 percent of women say they have driven faster than 90 m.p.h.

Question: **Have you ever...?**



Note: *56% of men and 29% of women had ridden on an airplane.
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, August 1954.

Question: **Here is a list of a number of things. Would you read down that list and for each one tell me whether you have ever done it or not?**



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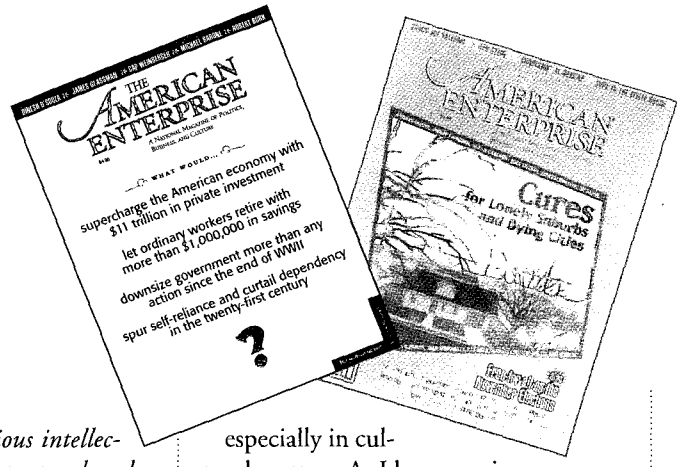

Your special issue devoted to Social Security was interesting, but for unexpected reasons (Jan./Feb.). It inadvertently showed that the "privatization" idea is a fraud on the level of the first FDR caper.

Government land and property can be privatized. But you cannot—and should not—privatize a welfare program. If, in the name of "privatization," tax revenue is channeled to Wall Street (which would itself be socialistic), that still leaves trillions in unfunded government liabilities, which is the real problem after all.

The only possible choices are raising taxes or cutting spending. It then turns out that the supposed "free-market" approach (at least as spelled out by Carolyn Weaver and the Cato Institute) is for Congress to institute a new tax (bizarrely labeled a "supplement") to fund the liabilities. So there we have it: a tax-gouging Greenspan Commission redux that has the blessing of conservatives and libertarians.

In truth, there's only one way out of this mess. It's not a sugar-coated "privatization" scheme, but total abolition: All liabilities must be repudiated and the whole program junked. The only good reforms are those that move in this direction, meaning lower taxes, fewer benefits, and a higher retirement age.

Jeffrey Tucker
The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Alabama

Carolyn Weaver replies:
Having drawn most of my insights into libertarian, Austrian, and free-market thinking over the years from such giants as Hayek, Friedman, and Buchanan, all Nobel Laureates, not to mention Mises, I was stunned by the suggestion that the way out of the Social Security "mess" is for the government to repudiate all outstanding liabilities. I am aware of no serious intellectual foundation for such a proposal and can think of no surer way to undermine the moral authority of the government to perform even the most limited functions.

In the 1960s and '70s, Friedman and Buchanan proposed "privatizing" social security. In one case the program would have been discontinued for workers; in the other it would have been transformed into a system of fully funded individual accounts. In both cases, outstanding benefit promises to retirees and accrued promises to workers would have been met (albeit through general funds or debt finance, not by the payroll tax).

Hayek, who in the 1950s offered rare insight into the pressures to overexpand Social Security, lamented that future generations could be saddled with a greater burden than they were willing to bear and so be led to a "breach of faith" with older generations. Mises, who spent much time on the problems of debt finance and recognized the implicit debt inherent in Social Security, never, to my knowledge, endorsed repudiating that debt.

Careful readers of the Social Security Advisory Council report will note that the plan I support includes a proposal to raise the retirement age. Taxes are also raised, but for the sole purpose of helping to pay off existing liabilities in the transition to privately owned, fully funded accounts.

I have been thinking about what Karl Zinsmeister wrote about conservatism possibly benefiting from not having a Maximum Leader at this particular moment (BIRD'S EYE, Jan./Feb.). Though the article is very thought-provoking, I'm not sure I agree with him.

What it seems to me that we need is not so much a "leader" as a bellwether, especially in cultural matters. As I have previously suggested, the great lack of the movement at this time is a "Ronald Reagan of culture," by which I mean a public figure capable of discussing cultural issues in an affirmative, solution-oriented way immediately intelligible to the electorate.

This person doesn't necessarily have to be a politician seeking after elected office, but that is by far the most effective way to seize the requisite national attention, especially given the fact that the media gatekeepers are far more hostile on cultural matters than economic ones. Hence the feeling that the presidential election just past was a terribly wasted opportunity.

Terry Teachout
New York, New York

The sidebar in SCAN (Jan./Feb.) entitled "What're the Media Smoking" was one of the most wrong-headed comments on the drug problem I've seen for a long time, and I was especially disappointed to see it in TAE.

Tobacco is responsible for about 400,000 deaths per year in the U.S., whereas cocaine, heroin, LSD, and marijuana combined are responsible for more like 6,000 per year, with marijuana contributing exactly zero to that total. Thus it seems entirely appropriate that network TV newscasts included more stories last year on tobacco than on the other drugs.

This emphasis on tobacco was one of the few positive things that could be said about the Clinton administration's drug policy, which was otherwise as firmly based on fear and ignorance as any administration's since Nixon's original declaration of the war on drugs in 1968.

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send to "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax to (202) 862-5867. Or e-mail 75272.1226@compuserve.com. Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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We have enough real problems, as TAE usually demonstrates, without calling attention to imaginary ones. Too much emphasis on the dangers of tobacco might be something for the tobacco companies to be concerned about, but surely not for the rest of us.

G. Alan Robinson
University of Texas, Houston

As a Briton writing about housing I was fascinated with your Nov./Dec. issue on cities and suburbs. I was quite impressed by the standard of the whole publication. Congratulations—you must put an enormous amount of work into each issue.

Robert Whelan
Institute of Economic Affairs, London

In SCAN (Sept./Oct.) you followed Lynne Cheney and the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* in taking a course description from Wesleyan's catalogue as conclusive evidence that I pursue politics in the classroom.

You might have wondered at some of the phrasing you printed from the description: a "collectively taught and student-organized course"; with "the guidance of two student facilitators, groups of eight to 12 students will plan and read the course's agenda: They will educate themselves." As the language clearly indicates, this is not "Ohmann's American Studies course," nor a staging point for my politics. The course is under the capable guidance of the mainly liberal students who wrote the catalogue description.

This 20-year old venture in student-organized education is not the property of any of the faculty members who take turns sponsoring it; none of us ever appears in the classroom to advance his politics.

Richard Ohmann
Wesleyan University, Connecticut

Ralph Reiland was downright sleazy to imply that bomb threats at the University of California were a form of "faculty protest" ("Runaway College Tuition," Sept./Oct.). No faculty member has been so charged. Were any to be convicted, he would face not only criminal penalties but well-deserved dismissal. And for the record, the Regents ordered—not "recommended"—the end of all affirmative action programs based on race, ethnicity, or sex (not "racial quotas"). There have supposedly been no "racial quotas" in the University of California at least since the *Bakke* decision in 1978.

As for Reiland's apparent belief that faculty venality will inevitably triumph over academic standards, last month my own faculty voted to maintain a course-dropping deadline at 10 days of instruction—despite administration warnings that it would cost the institution $5 million under state funding formulas. We did it on purely academic grounds.

Moreover, as much as I respect Jacob Neusner, I am afraid he's badly out of touch about Berkeley ("Cheers for No-Name U.," Sept./Oct.). The *city* of Berkeley may be a zoo, but U.C. Berkeley has not been a zoo for many years.

True, 25 years ago Sproul Plaza was full of Maoists and Trotskyites yelling at one another. But today it's full of Korean Christians inviting passers-by to prayer breakfasts. The *Daily Cal*, the student newspaper, is editorially indistinguishable from the *Wall Street Journal*.

Arthur M. Shapiro
University of California, Davis

Congratulations on a hard-hitting, honest, down-to-earth description of the malaise affecting America's public schools (Sept./Oct.). What your various researchers and writers said is as applicable to Canada and the United Kingdom as it is to the United States. Public education in the West is a mess, largely due to stagnant bureaucracies, self-serving teachers' unions, and misguided liberal educators.

As someone who shifted from the public school system to the private system 15 years ago, and has subsequently administered private schools in Canada, Hong Kong, and the Middle East, I am appalled by the results of the public schools in Canada and Britain. Most of their students lack intellectual depth, have no grasp of the English language, and, while fully cognizant of their rights, have little sense of responsibility to themselves or their society. Your special issue on schools should be required reading for everyone involved in public education.

Ian A. M. Robertson
Richmond International High School, Canada

When I was younger and naive, I was often encouraged by remarks from Democrat officeholders advocating entitlement reform. A pithy example in your Jan./Feb. issue was attributed to Senator Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.), who remarked that without entitlement reform, we will have "converted the federal government into an ATM machine."

But in addition to voting against the Balanced Budget Amendment, and "Line-Item Veto," Kerry voted *against* the welfare reform bill. Having observed my own congressman Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) perpetrate a similar fraud against 3rd District voters for 15 years, I now recognize the phenomenon instinctively: It is the cynicism and hypocrisy of a political party wedded to a welfare state that has forfeited public support.

Earl P. Holt III
St. Louis, Missouri

Unfortunately, an editing error slipped into my article, "Personal Savings Accounts Would be Good for Everyday Americans," (Jan./Feb.), which states that "every Social Security privatization proposal retains some safety net features that would catch the elderly who reach the end of their lives indigent."

While the statement itself may be true, it implicitly suggests I think safety net features are a good idea. I do not. Any government safety net will undercut the personal responsibility of people in the program. We could even end up with a crisis similar to the S & L crisis of the 1980s, as private investors take big risks with their retirement funds, knowing that if they blow it, the feds will bail them out. The ideal proposal for Social Security privatization would not have a safety net.

David R. Henderson
Pacific Grove, California

CORRECTION: The title of the Jan./Feb. LIVE said that Caspar Weinberger is the only person to serve as Secretary of Defense and HEW. In fact, Elliot Richardson headed both departments during the early 1970s.

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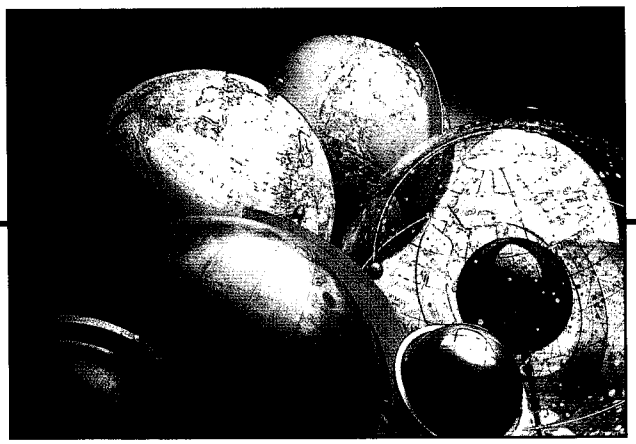

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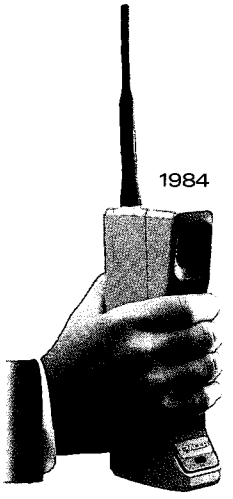
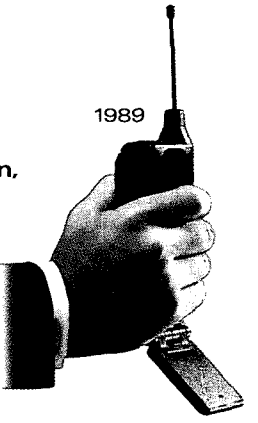
The people who introduced

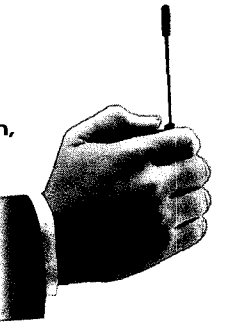
hand-held wireless communication,



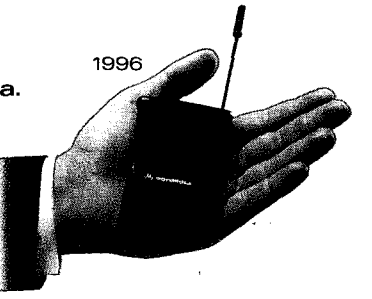
and portable cellular communication,



and personal cellular communication,



had another little idea.



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